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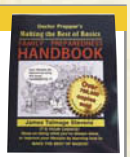

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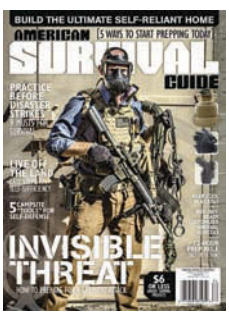

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SURVIVING THE STUPID:
TEACHING MOMENTS VS. LEARNING MOMENTS

AN UNFORTUNATE AMOUNT OF being prepared involves what I call "Surviving The Stupid." You know who they are: barely prepared to get out of bed much less survive a flood or riot. Comedian Ron White says, "you can't fix stupid." True, and it is always best to avoid it when you can. But I can't. I'm an editor and a mom. Everything to me is a teaching moment.

Take my neighbor. (*Please!*) The only thing we have in common is a fence. Our neighborhood is in a high-severity fire zone, near a fault line and not far from the worst part of Los Angeles.

Last week, he asked me, "What do you do all that prepping for?"

Aha! A teaching moment! Ignoring his obvious issues with grammar, I went straight to my rant, "I prep with a purpose."

"What's that?" he asked.

"To survive anything," I said.

"How's that?" he asked.

I took a deep breath, "Knowledge is everything. Remember Donald Rumsfeld? He once said: 'There are known knowns; there are things we know that we know. There are known unknowns; that is to say, there are things that we now know we don't know. But there are also unknown unknowns—there are things we do not know we don't know.'"

"YOU CAN'T FIX STUPID."
—RON WHITE, COMEDIAN

I explained the following to my neighbor: "My known knowns are simple: I know how secure my family is at home. In terms of food, water, defense, responsibilities and backup plans, there are no surprises.

"My known unknowns are those dateless probabilities: fires, earthquakes, power-outages, fuel shortages …

"And finally, my unknown unknowns: The 2011 Tohoku quake and tsunami that hit Fukushima, Japan, killed almost 16,000 people, and while natural disasters are known unknowns, the crippled 'tsunami-proof nuclear' plant was an unknown unknown and continues to pose an indefinable danger to the entire Pacific Ocean.

"Nothing in life is 100 percent," I told my neighbor, "but I feel able to weather most storms. Does that answer your question?"

"I think so, just one more thing," he said. "Who's Donna Rumsfeld?"

Moral: Just because it's a teaching moment doesn't mean it's a learning moment. ASG

Source: *Known and Unknown: A Memoir*, Donald Rumsfeld

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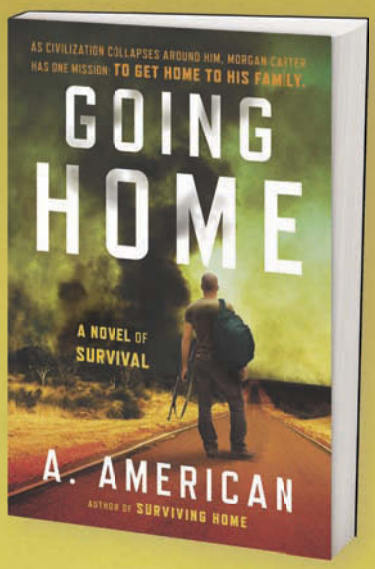

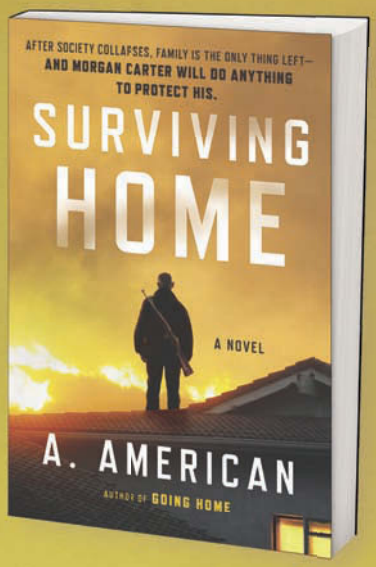

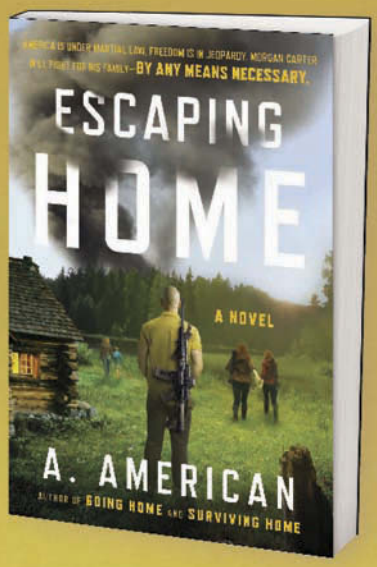

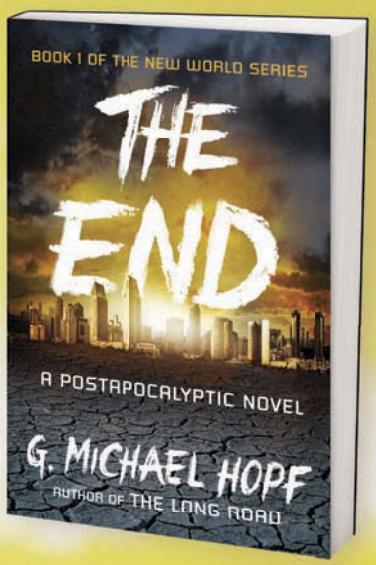

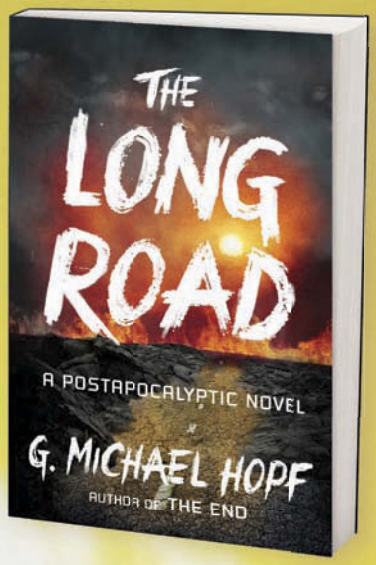

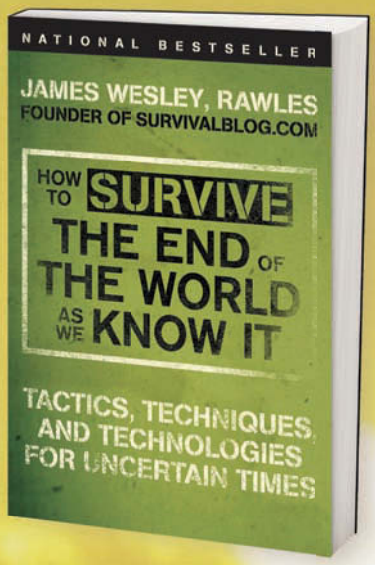

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PLUME

SLIPPERY SLOPE

WHILE YOU MIGHT BE focusing your energy on how to survive a bear attack in the backcountry, the reality is that you should be more focused on avoiding mudslides. In the entire decade from 2000 to 2009, only 12 people died from bear attacks in the United States, but between 25 and 50 deaths in the U.S. every year can be attributed to mudslides, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Fall 2013 was an especially active mudslide season when continuous rain and rising groundwater levels created a perfect storm that caused mud and water to move quickly, rocking homes off of their foundations and washing people into the debris.

In October, an Idaho family that went out for a hunt was cut off by a mudslide and later rescued safely after being stranded for hours. But people in Colorado weren't as lucky during their September rains, when a Jamestown, Colo., man died after a mudslide hit his house.

To ensure that these incidents don't cost people their lives, the NOAA has developed a warning system that could give several hours of warning to those in mudslide-prone areas when a mudslide is likely. If you're in a heavy rain- or mudslide-prone area, read up on the system so you can use it to avoid the dangers of a mudslide.

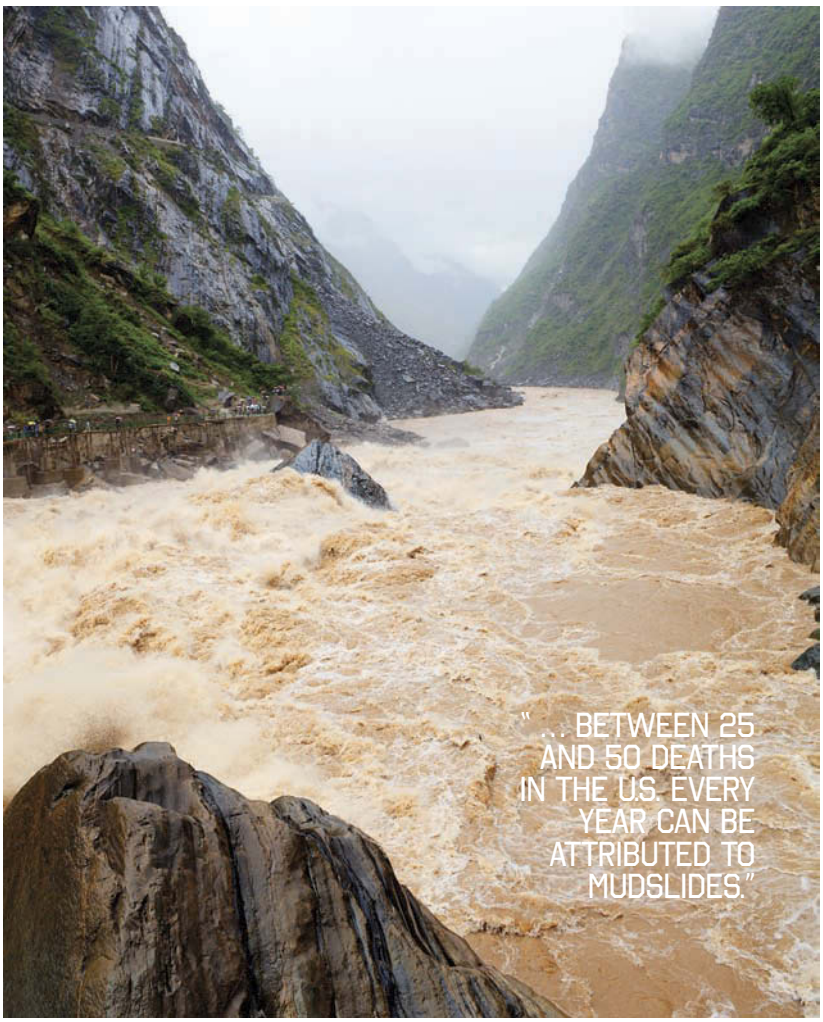


PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

To learn more about the warning system, visit www.noaa.gov/features/protecting_0409/mudslide.html.

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

Book Review:
PANDEMIC SURVIVAL: IT'S WHY YOU'RE ALIVE

YOU'RE SPENDING ALL of your free time prepping your family for a potential viral or bacterial outbreak, but your kids aren't so sure it could ever happen. Why not? Because they have never experienced a true pandemic, thanks to modern medicine. However, a new young adult book by Ann Love and Jane Drake could help them see why prepping is so important.

"Every person today is alive because of an ancestor who survived—and surviving our current and future pandemics, like SARS, AIDS, bird flu or a new and unknown disease, will determine our future," the authors say in "Pandemic Survival: It's Why You're Alive."

The book tells the history of disease and plagues throughout the world and also shares information on why kids today aren't facing the same issues that our predecessors had to battle.

One of the most interesting things about the book is that it tells kids that the source of a particular illness can't always be identified immediately. Although today's kids might think that antibiotics can cure anything, the reality is that diseases such as salmonella can still spread swiftly before anyone even realizes what started it, killing people along the way.

In addition, the book offers real-world advice on viral attacks, with concrete facts to back up its information. If nothing else, Pandemic Survival can be the impetus that starts a discussion with your kids about what you would do if a biological outbreak were to hit the U.S.

Note: "Pandemic Survival: It's Why You're Alive" is available on Amazon.com.

"EVEN A LITTLE BIT OF SURVIVAL TRAINING CAN GO A LONG WAY IN A REAL LIFE-OR-DEATH SITUATION."

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

SNOWED IN

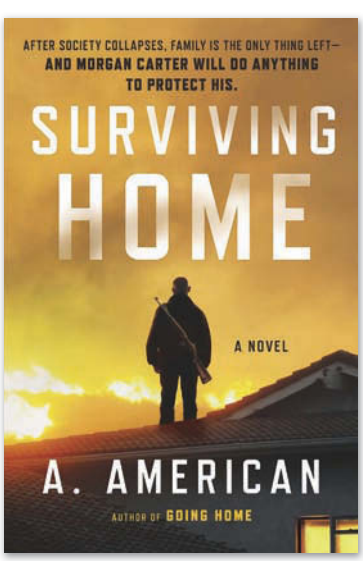
A NEVADA WOMAN who was stranded in the snowy California mountains for six days survived only after using survival techniques that she remembered from her brother's teachings.

Last December, the 46-year-old and her boyfriend were stranded after their vehicle was caught in a snowdrift not far from Lake Tahoe. Her boyfriend went for help but didn't return—unfortunately, he did not survive the ordeal, she would later learn.

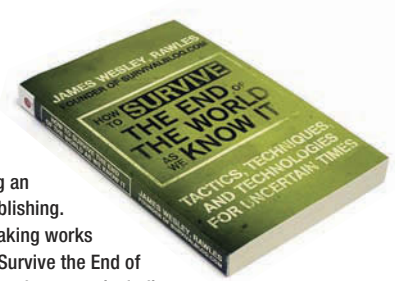
After three days on her own, she also left the car to find assistance. Using survival skills that her brother had taught her—including making socks out of tissues and tape and using a loud whistle as well as eating snow to survive—she persevered, she later told the TODAY Show.

Rescuers found her seeking shelter in a hollow tree. She was treated at a hospital and only suffered minor frostbite.

The takeaway? Even a little bit of survival training can go a long way if you're ever in a real life-or-death situation.



MORE GOOD READS



PLUME, A DIVISION of Penguin Group USA, LLC, was founded in 1970 as the trade paperback imprint of New American Library.

Throughout its history, Plume has been dedicated to giving an opportunity to voices previously neglected by mainstream publishing. The pioneering program has expanded to include ground-breaking works about survivalism, including James Wesley Rawles' "How to Survive the End of the World as We Know It," which provides tips on preparing for the worst, including a global financial collapse, a terrorist attack and a natural catastrophe. Rawles shares essential tactics and techniques for surviving completely on your own, including how much food is enough, how to filter rainwater, how to protect your money, which seeds to buy for your garden, why goats are a smart choice for livestock and how to secure your home.

Another prepper read from Plume is "Escaping Home: A Novel," by A. American. This novel explores what happens when the nation's power grid collapses, America is under martial law and safety is an illusion. The central character must decide whether to stay and defend his home or move to a more isolated area. The book chronicles a struggle to live in a world with no rules and how the strength of family can pull you through.

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Made of heavy-duty materials, making it ideal for long-lasting continuous use. The silver impregnated ceramic element is effective against bacteria and protozoa. The Katadyn Pocket is the only water filter with a 20 year warranty.

REG. $389.95 Now $369.95

KATADYN
MAKING WATER DRINKING WATER

Only $199.95

REPLACEMENT CARTRIDGE

ITEM #13-4893

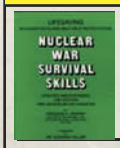
Free!* HEAVY DUTY 5 GALLON COLLAPSIBLE H^2O CONTAINER

ITEM #13-0403

*When you purchase a Katadyn Pocket Filter (#13-0800), you will receive a free 2- Pack of the heavy duty 5 gallon collapsible H^2O container.

REG. $24.95 Now $19.95

SURVIVAL BOOKS



NUCLEAR WAR SURVIVAL SKILLS

ITEM #12-2198

Only $24.95

WHEN ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE

ITEM #12-0007

Only $22.95

HOW TO SURVIVE ANYWHERE

ITEM #12-9411

Only $19.95

HOW TO SURVIVE THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT

ITEM #12-0009

Only $21.95

GREAT NORTHERN CAMP STOVE

26½" Tall with Legs

ITEM #16-2364

Super strong rolled steel construction. Sets up in minutes. Easy carry handle folds flat to become a stove cook top. Burns wood, compressed logs, charcoal or any convenient solid combustible.

Now $99.95 REG. $149.95

Now $295.95 REG. $335.95

MOUNTAIN HOUSE COMBO SPECIAL

ITEM #09-9368

By far the best food storage money can buy. Mountain House freeze-dried foods usually require only boiling water to prepare. These tasty foods have an incredible 25 year storage life. This combo special comes with an assortment of 12 (1 gallon) cans.

VISIT OUR STORE: 435 W. Alondra Blvd Gardena, CA 90248

LATEST AND GREATEST

CHECK OUT THESE NEW SURVIVAL PRODUCTS, STARTING AT LESS THAN $6

1. MAJOR SURPLUS

PRODUCT: BASIC PROVEN SURVIVAL KIT (3 DAYS)
WEBSITE: www.majorsurplus.com
MSRP: $30

Specifications:
- Five years minimum storage life
- Coast Guard-approved, purified water, six 4.227-fluid-ounce packets
- One 12-hour, non-toxic liquid light stick
- One large Mylar emergency blanket
- **Box Dimensions:** 10 inches x 8 inches x 4 inches

Defining Features:
A lifesaver in a box, The Basic Proven Survival Kit provides three days of food, water, light, warmth, first aid and shelter. All the basic and highest quality components are included. Food rations are a full 3,600 calories. The purified water is Coast Guard-approved. Blanket, first aid, complete survival instructions and checklist are also included. Packed in a heavy-duty, emergency yellow and black box.

Manufacturer's comment: "It's a beautifully boxed lifesaver and a great gift idea."
—Jared Clarke, sales and marketing director

2. PEAK10 PUBLISHING COMPANY

PRODUCT: SURVIVAL PLAYING CARDS
WEBSITE: www.peak10publishing.com
MSRP: Less than $6

Specifications:
- 52 regulation-sized playing cards
- Easy-to-read text
- Lightweight and extremely portable
- Perfect size for bug-out bags
- 3.4 ounces

Defining Features:
A deck of playing cards in which each card face is loaded with real, tested survival tips. Great for regular card games and for learning about survival. Whether you are on a outdoor hike, backpack, camp out or bug out, these cards provide valuable info, spanning topics that include How to Survive a Forest Fire, Creating a Wilderness Survival Kit, How to Fend off a Black Bear and more.

Manufacturer's comment: "This is a great way to pass the time while increasing your survival knowledge."
—Byron Walker, owner

3. CERES GREENHOUSE SOLUTIONS

PRODUCT: GREENHOUSE
WEBSITE: www.ceresgs.com
MSRP: $6,800 and up

Specifications:
- Passive solar design (energy-efficient and durable)
- Sturdy, highly insulated walls that provide the maximum insulation level in a wall so that you can grow year-round.
- 2-by-6-foot wall framing for durability
- Twin-wall poly-carbonate roof
- Roof framing and "Thermolock" system that prevents water leakage through roof
- Double-paned glass windows
- Metal door

Defining Features:
CERES started with the idea of applying passive solar design and green building technologies to local food production. CERES greenhouses are a place to relax, rejuvenate and to feed yourself sustainably on a year-round basis. Traditionally, greenhouses depend on large amounts of fossil-fuel energy to maintain suitable temperatures for growth. CERES greenhouses use a unique approach: By using strategically placed glazing, they create a super-insulated structure based on a passive solar design. The result is a greenhouse that maintains warm, year-round temperatures, withstands the harshest weather conditions and uses little to no fossil-fuel energy.

Manufacturer's comment: "Our super-energy-efficient greenhouses allow people to grow year-round without the hassle and without relying on fossil fuels for their food source. We aim to help people live more independently and sustainably by growing their own food year-round." *—Lindsey Schiller, co-founder*

4. NITRO-PAK

PRODUCT: LIFESTRAW
WEBSITE: www.nitro-pak.com
MSRP: $25

Specifications:
Length: 9 inches
Width: 1 inch
Weight: 2 ounces
Construction: Durable plastic
Capacity: Filters up to 264 gallons (1000 liters)
Shelf Life: Five years (at room temperature)
Included: One lanyard and caps for the mouth and end pieces

Defining Features:
Enabling users to safely drink from most contaminated water sources, LifeStraw is made for any emergency where water supplies are compromised. It is ideal for camping, hiking, boating—any situation where traveling light is important. Drink directly from rivers, streams or lakes. LifeStraw filters down to 0.2 microns, removes 99.9999 percent of waterborne bacteria and 99.9 percent of waterborne protozoan parasites. Contains no chemicals (BPA-free), batteries or moving parts. It has a high flow-rate and is easy to clean.

Manufacturer's comment: "LifeStraw is shipped to needy countries throughout the world. It was Time Magazine's 'Best Invention of 2005.' In 2008, it won Saatchi and Saatchi's 'World Changing Ideas' award and was named Esquire's 'Innovation of the Year.' Forbes declared that it was 'one of the ten things that will change the way we live.' " *—Aaron Curley, IT manager*

5. SURVIVAL BAGS, INC

Model: Elite Emergency Building Escape Survival Bag
Website: www.survivalbagsinc.com
MSRP: $375

Specifications:
- FOX Tactical Duty Pack
- Leatherman multi-tool
- Headlamp

Defining Features:
The Elite Building Escape Survival Bag provides emergency tools, gear and first aid to assist in escaping a building, apartment or other areas. Two different bags are available: the FOX Tactical Duty Pack (in high-visibility safety orange) or FOX Tactical Cobra Gold Reconnaissance Pack (in black). The bag contains a two-day food and water supply, a firefighter rescue survival axe from Ontario Knife, a Leatherman multi-tool, a Pico LED mini lantern and an eGear headlamp. Also includes an Ultimate Survival Technologies BASE Kit, an emergency blanket and poncho and other shelter, safety and hygiene items.

Manufacturer's Comment: "This Survival Bag was designed to give you the means necessary to escape a building in case you got trapped. Escape the darkness and see the light, stay alive!" *–Mike Haller, president*

6. SUN OVENS INTERNATIONAL

PRODUCT: SUN OVEN
WEBSITE: www.sunoven.com
MSRP: $399

Specifications:
- Attached, one-piece collapsible reflectors
- Built-in thermometer
- Spill-proof levelator
- Self-contained leveling leg
- Cookbook and emergency preparedness CD featuring 600 recipes
- Multi-level dehydrating and baking rack set (set of three racks with one roll of parchment paper)
- Two easy-stack pots with interchangeable enamel and glass lids
- Multi-fuel water pasteurizing indicator (WAPI)
- Two loaf pans

Defining Features:
Cook for free with the Sun Oven by using solar power—no fuel is needed! You can bake, steam or boil any kind of food in the oven, and it reaches temperatures of 360 to 400 degrees Fahrenheit. It is totally safe to use, versatile and as portable as a small suitcase. A guarantee allows returns in 30 days if you are not completely satisfied.

Manufacturer's comment: "A fantastic alternative cooking method that's free, easy and totally safe." *—Paul Munsen, president.*

CAN'T GET ENOUGH *ASG*? WHEN YOU'RE NOT OFF THE GRID, BE SURE TO **FIND US ON FACEBOOK**.

URBAN SURVIVAL INVOLVES a lot more than simply living through rush-hour traffic and finding cheap parking and good sushi (or vice versa).

When whatever happens, happens, you'll most likely be helping the distressed and endangered, so we have detailed the keys to effective urban search and rescue organization.

Assessing your situation constantly will be critical, and recognizing the not-so-obvious signs of chemical weapons is mandatory. Remember, surviving is sustaining, so get a jump on establishing amazingly sustainable shelter with Passive House design, where energy efficiency is integral to the architectural plan.

Compared to all this, that morning commute is going to look like a piece of cake. **ASC**

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

TRAVEL LIGHT

www.KelTecWeapons.com

THE SELF-RELIANT HOME

BY TORREY KIM | PHOTOS COURTESY OF WINDIMAGERY, LLC

CHECK OUT THIS ARCHITECTURE THAT'S OFF-GRID-READY

WHEN THE POWER GOES DOWN IN YOUR NECK OF THE WOODS, ARE YOU RUNNING FOR A HOTEL ROOM SO YOU CAN STAY WARM AND CONNECTED TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD?

You don't have to. If your home is designed and built properly, you can be self-reliant and off-grid—no matter what is affecting the rest of your town.

The key to ensuring that your home can protect you even during fires, floods or power interruptions is to start with the right architecture, according to Taylor Webb and Bob Phillips, owners of Manifold Design and Development. The company focuses on high-performance, super-sustainable building for residential and commercial projects so owners can be off-grid-ready at all times. American Survival Guide sat down with Webb and Phillips to find out how our readers can benefit from their company's expertise.

ASG: What does it mean for a home to be "off-grid-ready?"

Webb: It can go from being completely self-reliant to just having a solar system for backup if the power goes out. We just finished a home that has the potential to be off-grid. It is designed to have very low energy loads; it has solar hot water and photovoltaic panels to produce its electricity and heat beyond what can be harvested from the sun and the internal gains (occupants, appliances, etc.). To be fully net-zero, the owner just needs a battery backup for those times when energy isn't being produced from the sun. People can decide how far off-grid they want to be, and we help them find the resources to get there. The benefits of this are endless. Homeowners can use up to 90 percent less energy for heating and cooling, which lowers the need for energy—as well as the bill—significantly.

FOCUS: INSULATION, VENTILATION

ASG: Which types of sustainable strategies are employed to make a house off-grid-ready?

Phillips: When designing the house, we focus on how to reduce the energy needed for it; we ensure that the insulation is sound throughout the walls, floors, windows and roof. We also design to limit the amount of air leakage through the walls and windows. Better insulation and improved air-tightness result in a much higher level of efficiency. The higher the efficiency level, the less outside inputs it will require in terms of energy needed.

"THE HIGHER THE EFFICIENCY LEVEL, THE LESS OUTSIDE INPUTS IT WILL REQUIRE IN TERMS OF ENERGY NEEDED."

—BOB PHILLIPS, MANIFOLD DESIGN

PHOTO COURTESY OF MANIFOLD DESIGN

Walls were constructed with a second, 12-inch-deep insulation layer outside of the air-sealed sheathing to provide a superior building envelope. R-70 walls and roof with an R-50 floor and air-tightness tested at roughly 10 times better than a standard house results in approximately 80 percent less energy demand than a typical house; this is offset with a small photovoltaic and solar hot water system.

PASSIVE HOUSE DESIGN

Manifold Design uses the philosophy of "Passive House" construction to ensure that it builds efficient, self-sustaining houses. The philosophy behind Passive House design is that the home uses the most "free" energy so it can rely less on outside energy sources.

For more on Passive House design, visit the Passive House Institute's website at www.passivehouse.us.

This house is positioned to provide expansive views of the valley below.

The idea is to put your money where it has the most impact and longevity, so we advise people to focus on the building envelope—good windows, roof and insulation. Quality building envelopes can last 200 years and solar systems will only last about 30, so the money should go toward the most longevity and most impact. If you can knock your energy needs down low enough, you don't have to rely on bringing in gas; the house can run entirely with site-produced electricity generated by a much smaller system (PV panels, generator, wind, etc.).

Webb: Even on a more basic level, depending on the climate, the Passive House concept means the house will have such a low load-requirement that just the people in the house and their activities, like cooking and showering, along with solar gains from the windows, can sometimes generate the only heating necessary. A lot of the energy load in a house is for heating, so instead of putting in a big furnace, we pay attention to the quality and position of the windows so you get a lot of free heat and light from the sun and then shading in the summer that blocks it. In climates where cooling is more important, using windows with a low solar heat gain coefficient (SHGC) limits the amount of heat gained from the windows during the summer.

Phillips: Another important thing to keep in mind is the ventilation system. When a super airtight house is built, it will need outside air to replenish what the occupants use. This not only helps the house to be healthier and to have more oxygen in it, but it's also a means of filtering any outside pollutants and contaminants for the occupants. We use a heat recovery ventilation system to bring in outside fresh air, filter it, transfer the heat from the outgoing air to the incoming air, distribute the warm fresh air throughout the house and then exhaust the cooled, stale air back out.

ADD AN INDOOR GARDEN

ASG: Many of our readers grow their own food. Is there a way to integrate that into the home design?

The main space of this home is filled with natural light that provides almost all of the heat required by the home in the winter. In the summer, the sun is shaded by overhangs.

IS SACRIFICE REQUIRED?

You may think that a home can only be energy efficient if it's a tiny, one-room box, but the reality is that you can create a net-zero home at any size.

"A good house will balance it out, no matter the size," Phillips says. "I was in a home last summer when it was 103 degrees out, but inside it was 72 on the first floor and 74 on the second floor; the home has no air conditioning system. Likewise, in the winter, the owner uses a couple small plug-in heating units to offset what energy cannot be gained from the activities in the house and the sun during the coldest days, and it isn't a small house."

Windows are positioned to provide views of the surrounding mountains.

FIRE AND FLOOD RESISTANCE

Not only can you make your home self-reliant, but you can also use it to protect yourself and your family against natural disasters, such as floods and fires.

"If you're in a fire-prone area, we can integrate materials and construction details during the home-design process to resist fire," Webb says. "We can use non-combustible materials and design an airtight ventilation system in addition to sealing off any holes in the home or insulation that would allow smoke to travel into the house."

If a fire is approaching the house, the homeowners can close out the ventilation system, or any other openings, and the smoke fumes can't get into the home.

Manifold also offers flood protection on its designs.

"We can use materials that aren't susceptible if submerged in water," Phillips says. "The insulation and wallboards would be of types that wouldn't be affected by water and should be resistant to mold."

"PEOPLE CAN DECIDE HOW FAR OFF-GRID THEY WANT TO BE, AND WE HELP THEM FIND THE RESOURCES TO GET THERE."

—TAYLOR WEBB, MANIFOLD DESIGN

Webb: Absolutely. If the client wants a kitchen garden or greenhouse, we'll integrate that within the design of the house. You typically don't need quite as much light as people think to grow plants, so instead of doing that giant plastic translucent box that leaks energy in the winter, you can put in fewer windows—but make them better windows—and add light shelves to bounce extra light back into the windows. The window ends up being a light and heat source during the day and an energy source for growing plants.

Phillips: We try to get the full picture of what the homeowner wants to grow because the more plants you bring in, the more moisture you bring in. We look at the wall systems in a special way to design the walls so the moisture from the plants won't cause the walls to get moldy. We pay a lot of attention to how the house breathes.

ASG: Many people believe that building in this kind of net-zero manner is more expensive. Is that true?

Webb: In the long run, that's more of a myth than reality. Each project is custom and we work toward what the client wants. If you're building for yourself, you can set your budget and, therefore, your priorities. If you're concerned about efficiency, you'll get better walls and windows but less fancy countertops. Set your budget and we'll do what we can to give you the best possible house that meets your needs. Over the long-term, there is a significant return on your investment in efficiency because utility bills and maintenance costs are so much lower. ASG

FOR MORE INFORMATION

▸ Manifold Design is based in Colorado, but its staff members will go nationwide to design net-zero homes. Want to build your own place but aren't sure where to start? The company's architects can also serve as consultants to get you on the right path in creating your sustainable house. Visit www.manifoldinc.com for more information.

PHOENIX RISING

PHOENIX POP UP CUSTOMIZES YOUR RIDE SO YOU CAN GET OUT OF DODGE IN RECORD TIME

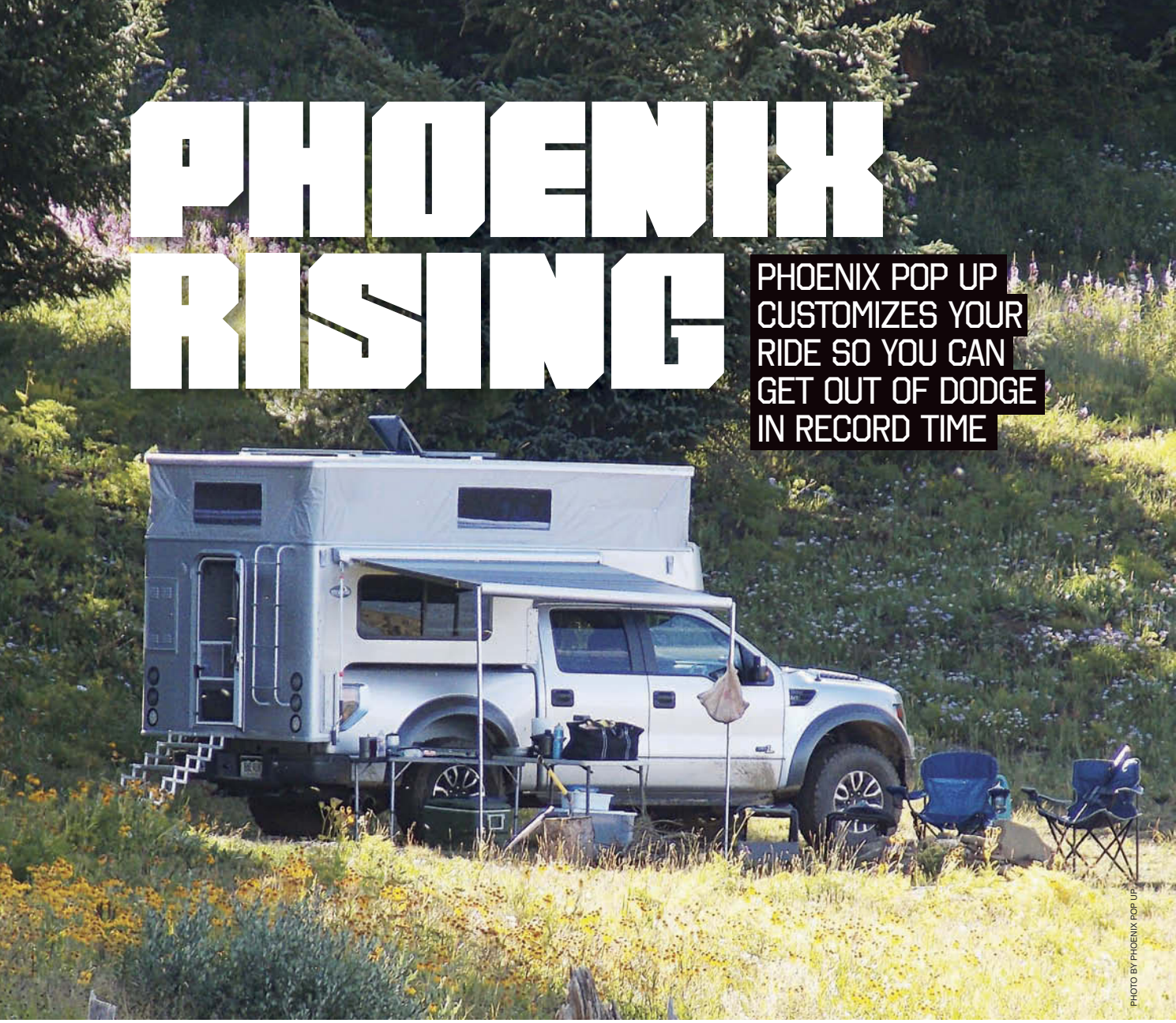


PHOTO BY PHOENIX POP UP

BY TORREY KIM

IN A SURVIVAL SITUATION, DO YOU KNOW HOW LONG IT WOULD TAKE YOU TO PACK UP YOUR CAR WITH THE ESSENTIALS AND GET ON THE ROAD TO A BUG-OUT LOCATION SUCH AS A CABIN OR HOTEL?

Even if you've run drills and timed it perfectly, chances are high that you could still get on the road in half the time if you had a survival vehicle that was packed and ready for you.

That's the point behind Phoenix Pop Up, a company that creates custom camper units that simply slide onto any pickup truck to create your ultimate survival vehicle. Don't have a pickup? The company can work with you anyway.

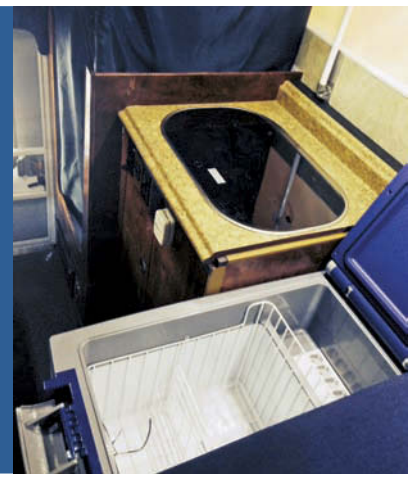
"We can literally fit just about any type of truck, flat bed or SUV," says Cari Rowe, Phoenix Pop Up's business development manager. "We even cut vehicles like Land Rover, Yukon, Suburban and so on to accommodate the pop-ups."

PHOTO BY PHOENIX POP UP

FOCUS ON COLOR

From the outside right down to the curtains, Phoenix lets you design the color of your pop-up.

"We now have virtually any color and coverage options you can dream of for the interior and exterior," Rowe says. "Inside, you can get super-durable things like stainless steel, rubber, bamboo and more. For exterior color, many folks are going for camo (any version), any solid color under the sun or multi-tone wraps of any kind."



PHOTOS BY PHOENIX POP UP

"WE CAN LITERALLY FIT JUST ABOUT ANY TYPE OF TRUCK, FLAT BED OR SUV."

–CARI ROWE, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, PHOENIX POP UP

WHAT'S INSIDE

You may expect a survival camper to be simply stocked wall-to-wall with water, MREs and other survival gear, but the reality is that you can get much more out of these pop-ups.

"Equipment-wise, our most popular setup includes stove, sink, water system, heater, air conditioner, restroom, shower and sitting/sleeping space," Rowe says. "But folks are also ordering lots of new exciting features, like solar battery chargers, power inverters, generators, escape hatches, extra insulation packages, exterior equipment storage compartments and more that are geared towards self-sustainability."

SURVIVAL TRUCK

One of Phoenix Pop Up's most intriguing designs is the company's Survival Pop Up, which includes the following features:

- All-aluminum, double-welded cage frame construction
- Wrapped full-sheet fiberglass sides
- Built-in locking exterior generator storage
- 110v power inverter
- A queen-sized main loft bed
- An emergency roof escape hatch over the bed
- Double insulation throughout
- An extra-large furnace
- Double-sized (33-pound) propane fuel storage with sight gauge
- Bunk bed extra sleeper capacity
- Three-speed, reversible ceiling cooling fan vent
- Hot shower
- Cab-access sliding front window
- Built-in lift-off jacks
- Fully hidden, quick-connect, easy-removal ratchet strap tie downs
- Secret under-bed gun (full-sized rifle) storage compartment
- Extra-large, high-efficiency, removable, 12v/110v, 78-liter ARB refrigerator
- High-efficiency LED interior lighting
- High-efficiency/output exterior flood lights
- Crank out awnings on side and rear
- Screen door painted to match truck for stealth look

Because the company's pop ups are fully customized, you can select as many, or as few, of these features for your own survival vehicle as you'd like—or you could start from scratch and base your needs on your family's requirements.

"Of course, we do have our three base units (Shell, PULSE and PULSE SC) that you can start your custom design from, if you like," Rowe says. "Or you can just let us know what kind of vehicle you need to fit, what equipment and features you would like to have in your Phoenix, and we can start up a full custom design from there." ASC

JEEPS WELCOME

When Phoenix says it can customize a pop-up to any truck, the company means it. Phoenix has even fitted Jeeps with its campers that include such features as a push-button air mattress bed, an electric refrigerator and a freshwater supply tank with a stainless-steel sink and electric water pump.

CONSIDER COST

Because the customization possibilities of a Phoenix are endless, the price can vary depending on what you want in yours. But there are some basic guidelines that can give you an idea of what you'd spend on a pop-up.

"You can get a basic shell unit with all-aluminum, welded cage frame construction, wrapped full-fiberglass sides, lighting, seating/sleeping space, storage cabinets, screen door, finished floors, walls and ceiling and invisible ratchet strap tie downs for $16,695," Rowe says. "On the other end of the scale, you can set yours up like our Extreme Survival Unit and spend around $30,000+."

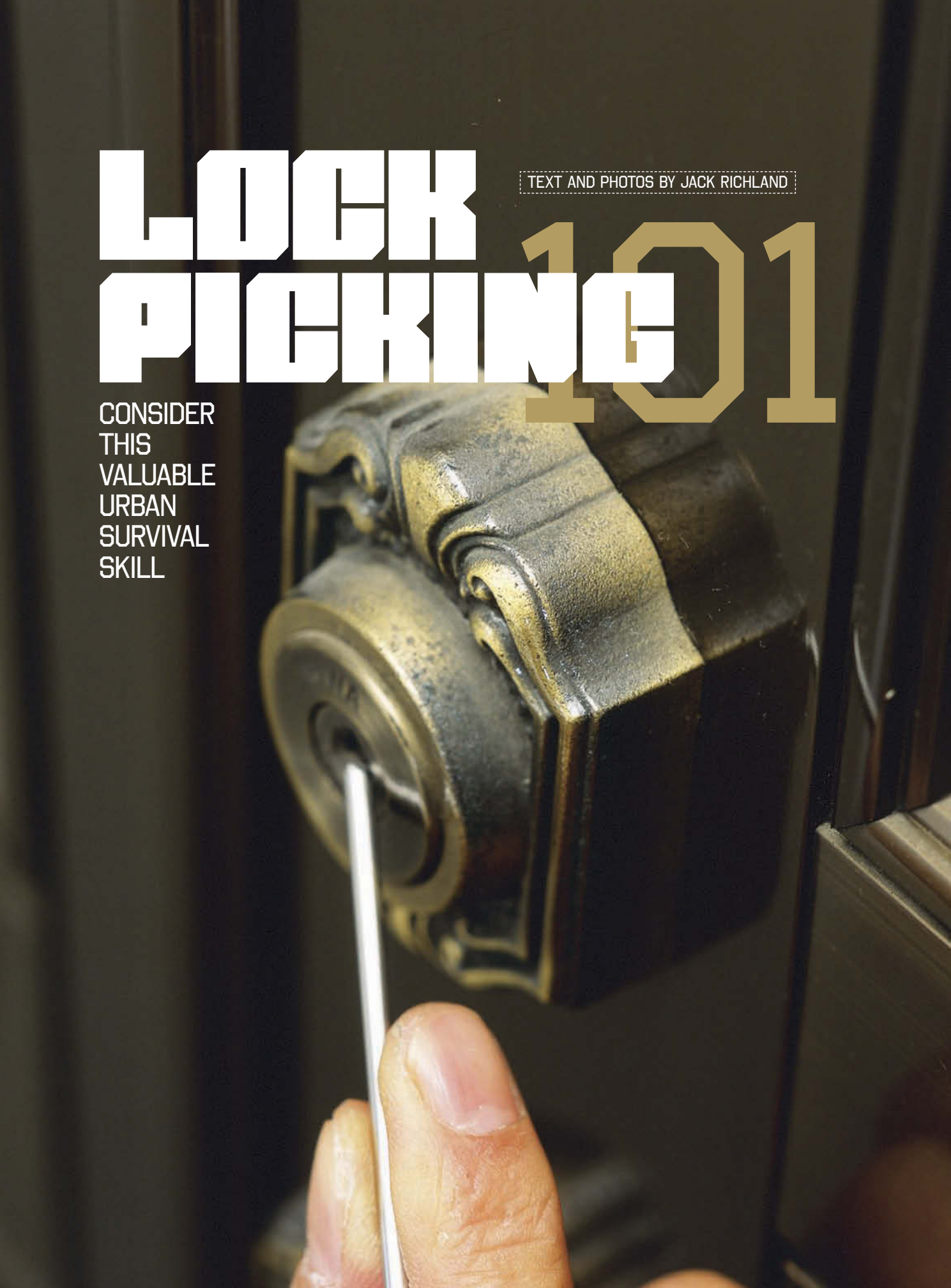
FOR MORE INFORMATION

▸ To learn more about Phoenix Pop Up or to start building your dream camper, visit **www.phoenixpopup.com**.

LOCK PICKING 101

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY JACK RICHLAND

CONSIDER THIS VALUABLE URBAN SURVIVAL SKILL



"WHEN THE GRID GOES DOWN, YOU CAN ACTUALLY STAY IN AN URBAN ENVIRONMENT AND FIND SHELTER TO PROTECT YOU FROM A DISASTER."

THE GRID GOES DOWN AND ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE. THAT'S OK, YOU'RE PREPARED. AS YOU TRAVEL, YOU SEE DESERTED BUILDINGS THAT COULD OFFER SHELTER OR SUPPLIES, BUT THEY'RE LOCKED UP TIGHT. WHAT NOW?

With preparedness becoming more mainstream through popular culture, building bug-out bags and survival stockpiles has become a fairly common practice. Many preppers/survivalists dream of bugging out to the wilderness with little more than a backpack filled with camping supplies. However, even the most skilled survivalist will have difficulty in sustaining him/herself with the contents that can be carried in a single bag.

When the grid goes down, you can actually stay in an urban environment and find shelter to protect yourself from a disaster. But what if that shelter is all locked up?

LOCK PICKING: A SURVIVAL SKILL

Lock picking is seen to many as a nefarious activity used by spies, private detectives and criminals. In actuality, it is an invaluable skill for survivalists and preppers alike.

In a grid-down scenario, most people think of fleeing to the wilderness to live primitively. By bugging out from their homes, these survivalists are leaving behind an abundance of gear, food and shelter in an urban environment.

In many instances, the only thing standing in their way of essential supplies is a lock. Do you want to build a primitive shelter or sleep in a tent in the wilderness, or would you rather pick your way into an abandoned, fortified building that can withstand a natural disaster and offer some security?

Lock picking is an easy skill to learn with a little practice. And, other than the initial investment in a pick set, it is relatively cheap skill to develop.

ANATOMY OF A LOCK

Before you can begin picking a lock, you will first need to understand the construction of one. We will focus on the pin-tumbler lock, which is the most common type and usually the easiest to pick. Deadbolts, doorknobs and padlocks all use the pin-tumbler system.

Lock picking is an invaluable skill for every survivalist.

The lock is housed in a cylindrical casing. Inside that casing is the plug (the section that rotates when you insert your key). The cylinder houses the springs that apply tension to the pins. There are two sets of pins: top pins, located in the cylinder, and bottom pins, located in the plug. The shear line is where the pins catch when they are lifted to the lock's appropriate setting. Once all the bottom pins have reached the shear line, the lock will open.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

There are a variety of lock pick styles and manufactures on the market. Read on to find out about the three basic tools needed to pick the most common locks.

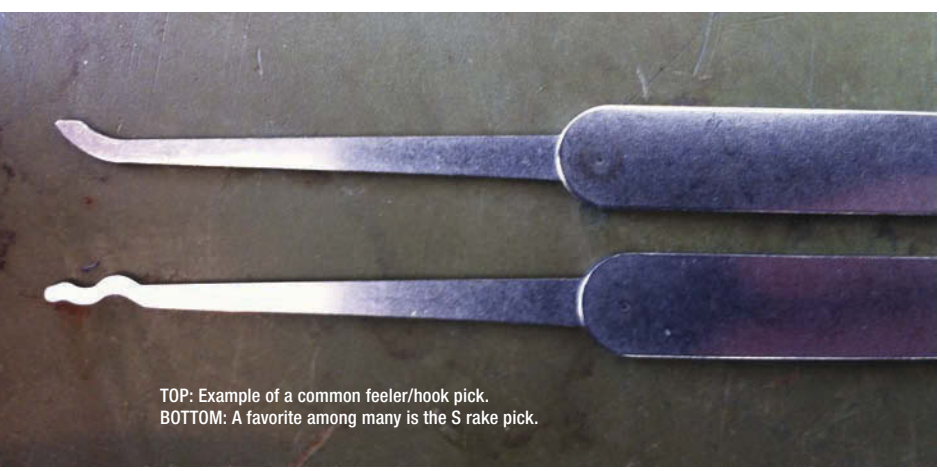
Tension Wrench: This tool is usually omitted in the movies; however, the tension wrench is one of the most critical tools used in lock picking. Without it, you will not open a standard pin-tumbler lock. This L-shaped wrench applies tension to the plug while the pins are being manipulated by the picks. When the pins reach the shear line, the

BEAT THE CURVE

SNAP GUN: Beat the learning curve with a lock-picking or "snap" gun. Snap guns were designed for use by law enforcement to bypass locks without spending a lot of time training their officers.

BUMP KEYS: Another technique that requires little skill is known as "bumping." Bump keys are modified keys that have all the valleys filed or cut to the full depth (of 999). The key is then "bumped" and jolts the pins to open the lock.

The tension wrench applies torque to the plug while you use other tools to manipulate the pins in the lock. Notice, the top tension wrench has a pick on the other end.



TOP: Example of a common feeler/hook pick.
BOTTOM: A favorite among many is the S rake pick.

You don't have to purchase lock picking equipment. You can make your own from commonly used items like these.

plug will rotate in the cylinder and open the lock. Only slight pressure is needed when using the tension wrench.

Feeler Pick: Feeler picks are designed for picking individual pins one at a time. The most common is known as a hook pick. I encourage beginners to start with this method. It helps develop the feel of picking and an overall general idea of what's happening inside of the lock.

Rake Picks: There are a wide variety of rakes on the market. They generally feature a peak and valley or wavy design. The most popular rakes are C and S types. While rakes are easy and effective, multiple simultaneous movements at a

"DO YOU WANT TO BUILD A PRIMITIVE SHELTER OR SLEEP IN A TENT IN THE WILDERNESS, OR PICK YOUR WAY INTO A FORTIFIED BUILDING ... ?"

fast speed are required to open a lock. You must move the rake horizontally under the pins while applying upward pressure to the pins through a vertical motion. In addition, you have to continuously move the rake in and out of the plug (but not fully exiting), while also jiggling up and down to lift the pins. Raking is quicker than single-pin picking and is highly efficient for bypassing most pin-tumbler locks.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Now that you have the tools and understand lock construction, start by practicing on a few padlocks.

Insert your tension wrench into the bottom portion of they keyhole.

You will need to determine which direction the plug turns, just as you would when using a key. If you're picking an unfamiliar lock or do not have the key, you will need to find out the proper

IMPROVISING PICKS

Lock picks can be improvised from everyday items, such as:

- Safety pins
- Bobby pins
- Windshield wipers
- Paper clips

direction. The easiest way to do this is to insert your tension wrench while your ear is close to the lock. Turn the tension wrench in one direction, then pull the tension wrench out while listening for the pins to drop. The direction that you hear the pins drop (a clicking sound) will be the proper direction.

Now that you've determined the direction of the plug, apply slight pressure with the tension wrench and insert your desired pick into the top of the keyhole.

If single-pin picking with a feeler pick, start gently lifting up each pin until the lock releases and the plug turns.

If you are using a rake, start with an in-and-out motion. If that is unsuccessful, use an up-and-down/in-and-out motion.

Once the pins meet the shear line, the lock will release and the plug will turn, opening the lock.

With these basic techniques and proper equipment, you should be able to pick a lock within a few hours. It's best to practice picking a few different locks. This could be old doorknobs, padlocks or cut-away locks. Cut-away locks are beneficial because they give you a view of the internal components of the lock.

Notice that the tension wrench is inserted at the bottom of the keyhole with the slightest amount of pressure as the pins are raked.

SECURITY AWARENESS

Not only will this skill set be valuable in a grid-down/urban-survival situation, it will also make you aware of the lack of security most common locks offer. Note: Lock picking should alert you to the necessity of properly equipping your home with specific security measures to safeguard against those who also have this skill set. As the old saying goes, "locks only keep out honest people."

GET INVOLVED

Locksport is the sport or recreation of lock picking. There are online forums where others exchange techniques. There are also local groups that hold conferences as well as lock picking contests.

"WITH THESE BASIC TECHNIQUES AND PROPER EQUIPMENT, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO PICK A LOCK WITHIN A FEW HOURS."

USING THE SKILLS

If you do find yourself in a grid-down situation, you will now have one valuable component to be able to survive and thrive in an urban environment. You possess the ability to surreptitiously open a door, find shelter in a secure, abandoned warehouse and access water at treatment facility. Or maybe the next time your buddy locks himself out of his house, you'll be ready! ASC

Pick guns were designed to aid law enforcement in bypassing locks quickly. They require little skill to operate and are very effective.

Jack Richland spent eight years serving in the U.S. military, parachuting from airplanes and blowing stuff up. During this time, he also served as a MCMAP (hand-to-hand combat instructor). He is an expert urban/wilderness survivalist and serves as editor in chief of blackscoutsurvival.com.

CHEMICAL WEAPONS once lived in the shadows of their more devastating nuclear cousins.

Not this century.

Chemical weapons give an attacker insane and often portable power. Because a chemical attack is one of the most deadly and unpredictable things that could happen, it only makes sense that adequately preparing for it is no piece of cake. It's pretty much accepted that Plan A is literally *head for the hills, if possible*. Getting above the threat until it dissipates is optimal. If that's not happening, everything depends on knowing what you are up against. You would hope to hear something on the radio, but don't count on it. More often than not, by the time recognition sinks in, it's too late. Your advantage comes with heightened recognition and response.

That's where we come in.

Odors, residues, lifeless silence … the clues will be there—can you spot them? There are many vapor-based threats and surplus gas masks are best left for Halloween. This is the 21st century, so think *domestic preparedness adaptable gas mask*. Properly augmented, it can render many biological and chemical weapons harmless. Complete your wardrobe with a fully encapsulated, tactical/military chemical suit. No matter how prepared you are, assisting others is more than likely, and we'll cover agent-specific preventions and treatments.

Pick up any newspaper and you'll know that surviving a silent, invisible, engulfing assault is definitely a required "new millennium" skill. ASB

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

LEARN HOW TO REACT IN THE EVENT OF AN INSIDIOUS CHEMICAL WEAPONS STRIKE

INVISIBLE THREAT

BY TORREY KIM

IF THE U.S. CAME UNDER A CHEMICAL WEAPONS ATTACK, WOULD YOU HAVE THE SLIGHTEST IDEA OF WHAT TO DO?

Unfortunately, the idea of this actually happening is not so "impossible" as it once seemed.

Last fall, the discovery of Syria's use of chemical weapons created an international crisis, with governments around the world condemning these dangerous toxins. In addition to a natural outcry against the use of these chemicals, many Americans also began to fear that such weapons could be used right here in the U.S.

Whether you think your area is very vulnerable to dangerous toxin exposure or you think the chance is low, you need to ask yourself a few questions just in case such a scenario occurred: How would you react if chemical weapons entered your airspace? Would you know they were there quickly enough to take action? And what actions would be necessary?

CHEMICAL AGENTS COULD BE DISPERSED

The reality, experts say, is that not all chemical weapons are the same, and you should know the differences between them.

"There are so many different types of chemical weapons, and the proper response depends on the chemical," says Anne Marie Helmenstine, PhD, a scientific consultant who serves as About.com's chemistry expert. "There are different routes of exposure and different mechanisms of action, so what protects you from one chemical may be completely ineffective against another."

For instance, she says, some chemical weapons are illegal compounds that are left over or stolen from stockpiles. These would mainly include nerve agents, such as sarin, tabun, VX and soman.

"It's actually quite unlikely a person would encounter these because they are illegal and therefore tracked," she says. "More likely, a person could be exposed to a chemical agent that is either legal or else easy to make. Tear gas and crowd dispersal agents are legal. Chlorine and mustard gas are fairly easy to make."

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

If you discover that you've been exposed to a chemical weapon, head to the emergency room immediately.

TREATMENTS DO EXIST

Because most nerve agents are odorless, invisible and tasteless, you may not know they're in use until you've already been affected.

"They are active if inhaled, ingested or absorbed across the skin," Helmenstine says. "You either die right away or else develop symptoms. The good news is, if you have symptoms, it's possible to seek medical attention for a common antidote and usually make a full recovery. The trouble is, the initial symptoms may mimic the flu or an allergic reaction. By the time it progresses to the inability to breathe, it's too late."

Therefore, if you hear that a nerve agent has been used, don't wait until your symptoms are

HOW ARE CHEMICAL WEAPONS TRANSPORTED?

You may not see a chemical tanker pull up before a chemical weapon strike occurs. In reality, terrorists can keep these toxins in much smaller receptacles. Because most chemical weapons are gases or liquids, "they could be carried in any sealable container," Helmenstine says.

When Disaster Strikes, *will you have what it takes?*

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severe before seeking medical attention—get to a hospital right away.

In the case of ricin exposure, you would experience flu-like symptoms.

"Modern tests can confirm ricin exposure," Helmenstine says. "The problem is, it's unlikely you would know you were exposed. The usual tell-tale sign is to encounter a suspicious white powder, but there are other ways to be exposed."

If you are facing exposure to chlorine or mustard gas, you might know they're in the air due to the odor.

"Chlorine and mustard gas are yellow-colored gases, heavier than air, with distinctive smells," Helmenstine says. "Searing pain in the mucous membranes of the eyes, nose, mouth and lungs is the classic symptom."

CHANGE CLOTHES IMMEDIATELY

If you think you may have been exposed to a chemical weapon, remove any affected clothing and seek immediate medical attention.

"Be sure to explain why you think you were exposed to a chemical agent," says Helmenstine. "Usually, if you're alive to seek aid, you'll come through it OK."

SEEK HIGH GROUND

In many cases, you may get a heads up about potential chemical weapon use by watching the news or listening to a radio alert.

"If you hear there may be chemical weapons in the area, the best course of action is to get far away," Helmenstine says. "However, if emergency management officials tell you to stay in your home and close the doors/windows, then listen to that advice. Most weapons will react with air, settle out or disperse, so all you need to do is wait it out. Keep in mind, many agents are heavier than air, so if you are out in the open, seeking high ground is a good idea."

IN CONCLUSION

There's no foolproof way to save your life during a chemical weapons attack, but being prepared will absolutely give you an edge and help you survive. ASG

Torrey Kim lives in North Carolina and is a contributing editor for ASG.

If you're in the open when a chemical attack hits, head to high ground.

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

"MOST WEAPONS WILL REACT WITH AIR, SETTLE OUT OR DISPERSE, SO ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS WAIT IT OUT."

—ANNE MARIE HELMENSTINE, PHD, SCIENTIFIC CONSULTANT AND CHEMISTRY EXPERT FOR ABOUT.COM

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

Unless you have a unique cartridge that filters out specific toxins, don't rely on a gas mask to save you from a chemical weapons attack.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

▸ To learn more about chemical weapons and other chemical topics, visit Helmenstine's website at **chemistry.about.com**.

ARE GAS MASKS HELPFUL?

You may want to stock up on gas masks to prepare for potential chemical attacks, but don't invest your savings just yet, Helmenstine says.

"Gas masks aren't all that effective unless you're in the military or otherwise have access to the special cartridges that would inactivate the toxins in the weapons," she advises. "Breathing through a cloth probably is better than nothing, but the best protection is to avoid exposure."

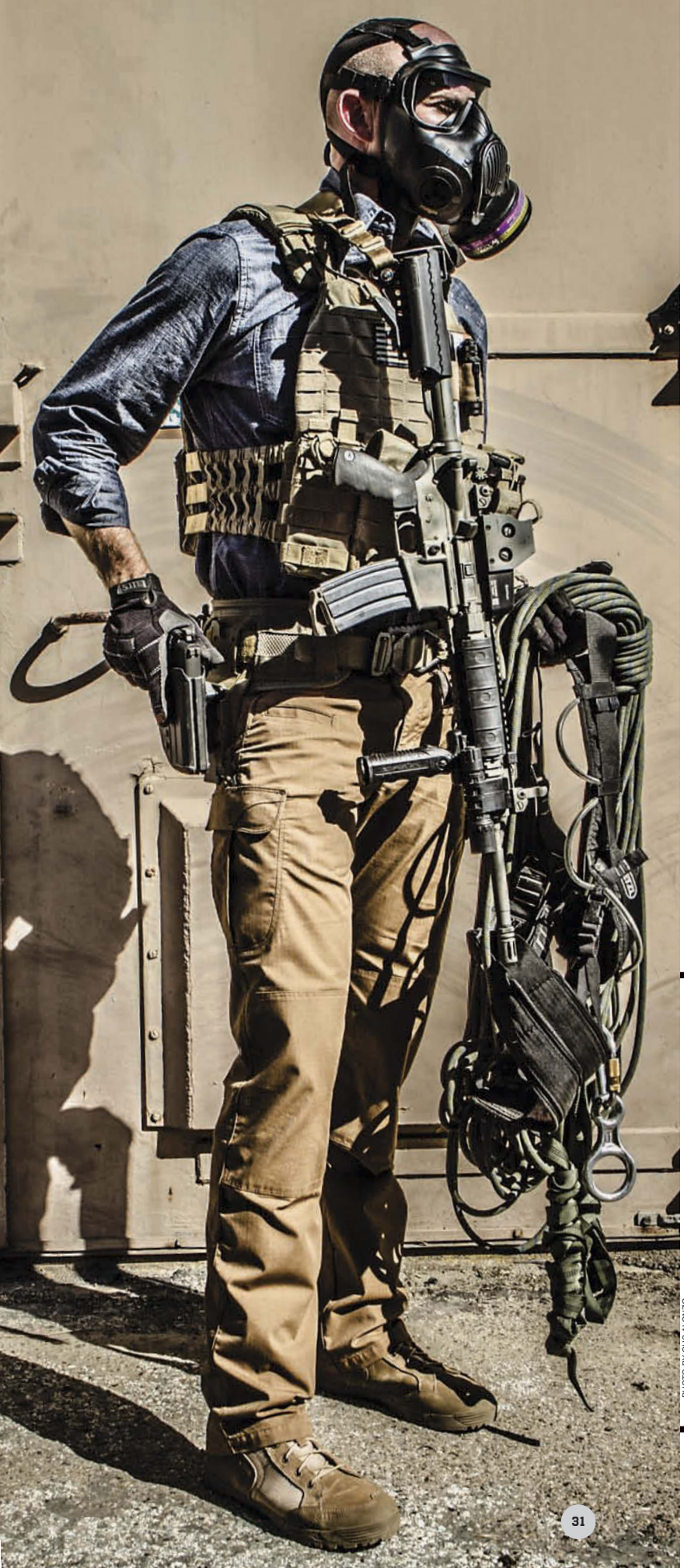

PHOTO BY GUS ALONZO

BOTTOM-LINE BUG OUT

IN THE CASE OF CHEMICAL WARFARE, GET READY TO ROLL WITH GEAR FROM 5.11 TACTICAL

BY WES PARKER

CHANCES ARE, IF SERIOUS CHEMICAL WARFARE HAPPENS, YOU'RE IN DEEP. The best chance you have of surviving a chemical attack is, in short, to get outta town.

To help you prepare to bug out, 5.11 Tactical carries a complete line of products that enhance safety, accuracy, speed and performance, all of which can mean the difference between life and death in a serious situation.

With a wide array of gear ranging from pants and shirts to footwear, bags and packs, 5.11 definitely has the goods. Turn the page to check out the gear our cover model (5.11 Tactical Director of Product Intelligence Dave Rhoden) is wearing and decide what it is you need to truly be prepared to escape the unthinkable.

CONTACT INFO

www.511tactical.com • (866) 451-1726

THE GEAR

PHOTOS COURTESY OF 5.11 TACTICAL

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1_Chambray Shirt
5.11 Tactical combines superior comfort, quality and aesthetics to provide an ideal choice in casual or covert CCW wear. The shirt is made from 100-percent pure cotton and features 5.11's patented hidden-document pockets and traditional patch pockets at the chest.
MSRP: $69.99

2_TacTec Chest Rig
Here's a sturdy and reliable foundation for your tactical kit. The rig includes six front-facing compartments, twin outside compartments and a rear admin pocket for quick access to maps or documents. Its lightweight construction provides a full range of movement and a weatherproofing treatment keeps all of your gear dry and secure. The integrated web platform across the chest rig exterior is MOLLE and slickstick compatible.
MSRP: $84.99

3_Blood Type Patch Kit
Designed to provide fast and accurate information to EMS and medical services professionals regarding your blood type and medical allergies, ensuring that you receive the attention you need without delay.
MSRP: $9.99

4_TactTec Plate Carrier
Get protection where you need it most without the weight or bulkiness of a traditional flak jacket. Features include a skeletonized waistband and yoke shoulder pads for a secure and comfortable fit, an integrated laser-cut web platform and a one-handed quick-release/escape system, as well as an integrated, extendable drag handle and adjustable elastic tensional bands for stability during periods of high activity.
MSRP: $199.99

5_Light-Writing Patch
Keep your pen and flashlight within reach at all times with this patch that's built to mount on a shoulder or chest tab. Hidden pocket allows storage of creds, cash or business cards.
MSRP: $7.99

6_TMT L1 Flashlight
The newly redesigned TMT L1 Tactical Mission Torch offers three lighting modes, a momentary-on toggle and an intelligent switching feature that allows you to adjust your visibility cone on the fly. It's impact and water resistant and requires one CR123 battery (included) to provide up to 212 lumens of light. Run time on a single charge is two hours on high mode, 3.25 hours on strobe mode and 25 hours on low mode.
MSRP: $69.99

7_Bungee Covers
A. The Double Pistol Bungee offers added storage in a compact, lightweight and updated design, allowing the end user to choose their preferred method between a standard cover flap or bungee cord retention. An integrated elastic compression strap ensures stable and silent operation.
MSRP: $19.99

B. The AR/G36 Double Bungee Cover Pouch offers storage space and quick accessibility for two 5.56 magazines. Authentic Duraflex hard points provide reliable action in urgent situations while a weatherproofing treatment and non-slip pull tabs ensure easy accessibility in winter or wet climates. All 5.11 pouches attach via patented slicksticks for fast removal and easy weaving.
MSRP: $29.99

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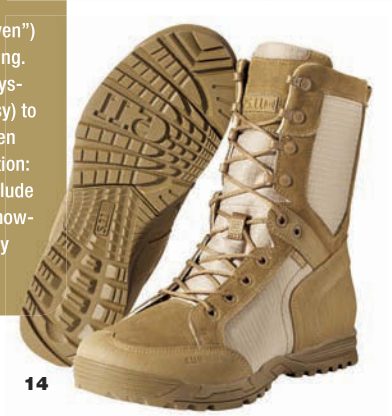

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WHAT'S IN A NAME?

5.11's name (pronounced "five-eleven") comes from the sport of rock climbing. As listed in the Yosemite Decimal System, skill levels range from 5.0 (easy) to 5.10 (difficult). Naturally, 5.11 is even more grueling. 5.11's official definition: After thorough inspection, you conclude this move is obviously impossible; however, occasionally, someone actually accomplishes it.

8_VTAC 2 Point Padded Sling

This sling augments any standard-size rifle or submachine gun to provide superior flexibility and security in any tactical situation. Quick-adjust action lets you rapidly transition between shoulders or pull your firearm in close for tighter support in close quarters.
MSRP: $47.99

9_VTAC Brokos Belt

This item offers superior load distribution and extensive storage customization, allowing you to choose the loadout that best suits the task at hand. Features include six-inch-high, high-density polymer inserts for an ergonomic shape that keeps the weight of your gear distributed evenly across your hips, minimizing fatigue and increasing stamina.
MSRP: $74.99

10_Double Stack Mag Carrier

These magazine pouches securely carry your pistol's magazine and provide quick access when it's time to reload. They're made of a proprietary blend of polymers designed to retain their shape in temperatures of up to 300 degrees Fahrenheit and not become brittle in sub-zero conditions.
MSRP: $32.99

11_Maverick Assaulters Belt

Comfortable, ergonomically curved and designed to provide one-time fit-and-forget convenience, this belt features customizable AustriAlpine buckles for quick attach and detach action. Includes a quick-attach web loop at the front.
MSRP: $94.99

12_Station Grip Gloves

These gloves combine rugged durability with a strong design that stands up to the toughest tasks. Heavy-duty tactile reinforcements at the palm and fingers provide excellent flash-and-slash protection while remaining flexible and responsive, and a knitted back panel offers a four-way stretch feature that ensures a snug and secure fit. Padded knuckles guard against impact and abrasion, and elastic wrist closures keep out moisture and debris.
MSRP: $27.99

13_Thumbdrive Holster

This Level II holster is designed for secure retention of your weapon with a safe and easy-to-access thumb release. Designed to fit a variety of weapons, including Glock, S&W M&Ps, Sig Sauers and Berettas.
MSRP: $64.99

14_Recon Desert Boots

These lightweight desert boots offer traction, agility and comfort in hot and humid environments. The molded exoskeleton structure significantly enhances durability and support while reducing weight, and a breathable ripstop nylon ensures superior ventilation to mitigate warm climates. The full-length CMEVA midsole and nylon shank enhance torsional rigidity, and a broadened forefoot increases toe splay for traction and balance.
MSRP: $149.99

15_Stryke Pant With Flec-Tac

A multi-purpose range pant made from a specialized blend of mechanical stretch polyester and cotton engineered to provide extreme durability and performance in the field. Features include front hip pockets sized for a knife or cell phone, double-deep and double-reinforced cargo pockets, integrated kneepad pockets (kneepads sold separately) and badge holders at the left and right front belt loops.
MSRP: $70.99 ASG

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WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF PREPPING, where hunger, sickness and safety are the other peoples' problems. We at ASG are about solutions.

When it comes to survival techniques, there is a lot of information available out there … and it's not all good. We'll show you the right way to start prepping and to best ensure your long-term success. In addition, we'll examine how to best practice those skills, making them practically second nature. Incorporating good sustainability habits is paramount; waste is your enemy. We will dispel the three-day emergency store theory and reveal the real basis upon which your storage needs should be decided. And we'll show you what a prepper's perfect emergency pantry ought to look like.

When the situation sours, it can happen quickly, so preparing for the worst is more than just keeping an extra can of beans in the kitchen and a first-aid kit in the closet. Putting some forethought into meaningful prepping can be the difference between failure and success.

So, you better be prepared to get prepared. ASG

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

THE LONG HAUL

SOME SITUATIONS REQUIRE MORE THAN THE "72-HOUR PREP" RULE

BY LARRY SCHWARTZ | PHOTOS BY THINKSTOCK

"IN CASE OF A DISASTER, FEMA WILL NOT EVEN MAKE A DECISION TO ASSIST FOR SEVERAL DAYS …"

— LISA BEDFORD, BLOGGER AT SURVIVALMOM.COM

SO, ALL OF YOUR PREPPING GETS YOU READY TO WEATHER AN EMERGENCY LASTING 72 HOURS. GREAT! BUT WAIT A MINUTE—WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE DISASTER LASTS LONGER? YOU'RE OUT IN THE COLD.

It used to be that prepping for 72 hours in the case of an emergency was a rule of thumb. No more.

With so many disasters happening these days in so many densely populated areas, you need to think longer term and take into consideration how long it might take to restore services in your area, how long you may have to wait until rescue arrives and how much you need to pack in a bug-out bag in case you have to evacuate.

Natural disasters, such as earthquakes or hurricanes, can throw a community into crisis in a matter of minutes. Having a tested plan and resources in place will allow you to take care of yourself and be of assistance to your neighbors.

DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN

Hurricane Sandy is a prime example of how natural disasters in a densely populated region can create long-term disaster situations: Its effects lasted not just a few days but for several weeks, and then, it was followed by another major storm.

Sweeping up the East Coast, Sandy caused problems from the Carolinas all the way up to Maine, with power outages that affected gas stations' ability to pump fuel and grocery stores' ability to refrigerate food. The gas shortages affected food delivery and the arrival of relief personnel. With hundreds of thousands of people affected, pulling repair crews from surrounding areas to speed up repairs was impossible because *all* areas needed help.

The interdependence of our energy systems was revealed in glaring clarity during Sandy.

As a result, those who planned for just 72 hours of waiting for help found themselves sorely underprepared, and those who did not prepare at all had to depend on their neighbors or go without until rescuers arrived.

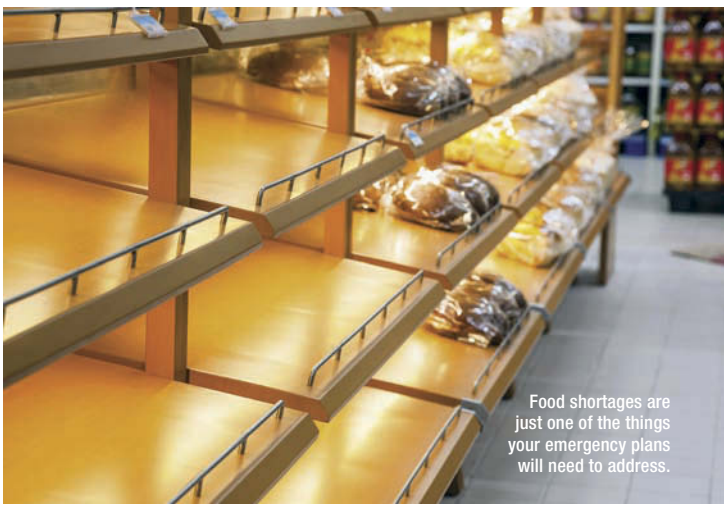
"IT USED TO BE THAT PREPPING FOR 72 HOURS IN THE CASE OF AN EMERGENCY WAS A RULE OF THUMB."

THE BASICS

The following is what is suggested for a 72-or-more-hour emergency kit; build on this for long-term plans!

- ✓ One gallon of water per person per day for drinking and sanitation
- ✓ At least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- ✓ Battery-powered radio and NOAA weather radio with tone alert; extra batteries for both
- ✓ Flashlight and extra batteries
- ✓ First-aid kit
- ✓ Whistle for signaling help
- ✓ Infant formula and diapers, if required
- ✓ Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- ✓ Dust mask or cotton t-shirt to help filter the air
- ✓ Plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter in place
- ✓ Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- ✓ Can opener for food
- ✓ Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person
- ✓ One complete change of warm clothing per person, including:
- ✓ A jacket or coat
- ✓ Long pants
- ✓ Long-sleeve shirt
- ✓ Sturdy shoes
- ✓ Hat and gloves

Source: www.fema.gov



Food shortages are just one of the things your emergency plans will need to address.

Water, either bottled or from a source you have filtered yourself, is one of the most critical things you will need to have.

WHO YA GONNA CALL?

There are a number of organizations that may be helping in an emergency situation in your area:

> Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): Responsible for supporting local efforts with federal resources.

> State-level Emergency Management Agencies: Responsible for coordinating emergency response efforts on the local level and providing the initial support and resources, where needed.

> Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs): These are locally organized teams whose members have received training on how to handle the challenges of natural disasters and other emergencies and who know how to best get the supplies and information you will need.

"In case of a disaster, FEMA will not even make a decision to assist for several days, and once they decide to move, it will take a few more days before you will see their personnel. CERT/FEMA advises that delay is likely to be seven days," says Lisa Bedford, a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)-trained prepper who writes a blog at www.SurvivalMom.com.

BETTER SAFE THAN SORRY

Make plans for short-term emergencies (three days), yes, but make sure you also make plans for longer-term situations of at least three weeks.

You'll obviously need to employ different strategies for the long haul.

Frigid winter weather with ice, snow and rain can cause widespread damage to power and water systems that affect more than just electricity or water.

Repair crews are often faced with so much work that it may take several days or weeks for repairs in your area to be completed.

"YOU'LL OBVIOUSLY NEED TO EMPLOY DIFFERENT STRATEGIES FOR THE LONG HAUL."

Good ideas include having a propane grill for cooking on hand, keeping a portable water filter to reduce the amount of bottled water that you need to store, stocking up on extra batteries and purchasing a battery or crank radio for listening to the news. Food stores should also be prepped with longer times in mind.

Should you need to bug out in the case of a serious emergency, you'll need more than the standard bag with three days of supplies. Decide what you'll take and have that on hand just in case.

JUST DO IT!

Now that you know what you need to prepare for, plan on how you are going to address each scenario you expect you might face. Then, collect the food, water, batteries, cooking systems and other materials you'll need. Finally, accomplish the most important part of your preparations: Give things a dry run so you're *really* ready for an emergency situation. **ASG**

PREPARE FOR THREE SCENARIOS

→ **One to Three days:** Have the materials and supplies on hand that you will need for a few days until things get back to normal.

→ **Three to 30 days:** The longer duration means that stocking up on things may not be enough; think about how you will do things if you don't have gas for your car or if you have to generate your own electricity. To be prepared for the three- to 30-day scenario, you should add the ability to filter water from local sources, have access to a wood-burning stove for when your bottled gas fuel runs out and keep larger stores of food in the form of canned foods, powdered milk and pasta-based meals.

→ **One to 12 months:** If things are this bad, you need to be totally self-sufficient in terms of power, food and water; your regular location may not be able to support these needs. For this one- to 12-month scenario, you should have the capabilities found in the previous two scenarios with the addition of your own source of fresh foods—a vegetable garden, raising your own chickens or goats—the ability to store/purify large amounts of water and a way to generate your own electricity, such as mounting solar panels, a small wind turbine or a watermill that you can put into a local stream to charge batteries that you can run your electronics on.

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

FOOD FACTS

TIPS TO HELP GET YOUR EMERGENCY PANTRY IN GOOD SHAPE

BY LARRY SCHWARTZ

FACT: FOOD IS ONE OF THE NECESSITIES OF LIFE. FACT: IN AN EMERGENCY SITUATION, HAVING ENOUGH FOOD THAT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY REALLY WANT TO EAT CAN BE A GODSEND AND A COMFORT.

The real answer to what kind of food to store depends on the kind of emergency for which you're preparing. For instance, food for a short-term, stay-at-home situation will be different from what you need for a long-term, bug-out scenario, which will be different from what you need if you are on the move.

Follow along and decide what best fits your food needs in a survival situation.

> "… IT'S IMPORTANT TO THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU NEED FROM SHELF-TO-MOUTH TO CONSUME EACH ITEM."
>
> —ATTIE POIRIER, RED CROSS SPOKESPERSON

THE BIG THREE

Canned foods: If weight is not an issue, canned foods are probably your best bet for long-term food storage and ease of use. You can get pretty much anything in a can and it will last from two to five years without a problem. All you need is a can opener. An added benefit is that canned foods—especially veggies—often contain water, which makes it easier to heat them up *and* can add to your water supply.

Dehydrated foods: When weight or volume is an issue—such as when you are on the move or don't have much space to store your long-term food supply—dehydrated foods are a good option for your emergency pantry. These are always good to have in addition to other foods. One negative is that they don't look much like their normal state, so they may not be appetizing to some in your group or family.

Freeze-dried foods: Freeze-dried foods still look like what they did before they were processed and you can eat them without rehydrating them. They are also lighter weight, but they won't help with your water needs.

COOK IT

> If you are in an emergency situation, then you probably don't have electricity or gas for cooking. Here are some things you may already have—or could easily get—that you can cook with:

Camping stoves: The ubiquitous Coleman camp stove has saved many a family's bacon, especially when they have to cook it after the refrigerator goes off. These stoves are inexpensive, have multiple burners and are as adjustable as a normal gas range. Their smaller cousins, the backpacking canister stoves, such as those made by Jetboil, MSR and Snowpeak, also serve well as single-burner stoves and excel at boiling water and preparing rice or pasta-based dinners.

Charcoal or propane grills: Many homes have a full- or small-sized charcoal stove in their backyard or on their deck, patio or balcony. These grills can do everything from boiling water to cooking like you do on your indoor stove to baking.

Candles: You can actually bundle candles together and provide enough heat to cook! Use them in an area that will conserve the heat, like on a cooking sheet in your oven with the cans you are heating up above them on the oven grate. Chef Glenn McCallister, the Backpacking Chef, tells us,"Believe it or not, you can cook a meal using nothing more than a few candle stubs or some tea candles as your heat source under a thin pot or pan … make sure to use a lid on the pot or pan to keep the heat in."

PHOTO BY LARRY SCHWARTZ

Buy what you need for your pantry when things are on sale.

"MAKE SURE YOU CHOOSE A DRY, COOL, DARK PLACE TO HELP PRESERVE THE FOOD YOU STORE THERE."

STOCK UP

"When stocking your emergency kit and pantry, it's important to think about what you need from shelf-to-mouth to consume each item. Make sure you have the appropriate utensils and kitchen equipment to open cans, and think about whether items can be consumed raw or will need to be heated," Red Cross Spokesperson Attie Poirier advises.

The key to keeping heatlthy is to make sure you have a balanced mix of foods to ensure a balanced diet.

Try to buy the same things that you normally eat; a big mistake many people make is to buy freeze-dried or dehydrated foods that they have never eaten before, and eating strange, new foods could cause stomach problems, especially in stressful situations.

To keep your costs down and help get your extra supplies in place faster, buy a little extra each time you go to the grocery store. An extra $10 can get you a dozen cans of vegetables or a half-dozen cans of meat or spaghetti and meatballs.

TEGs

A new technology that is gaining in popularity for backpacking countries is thermo-electric generators, or TEGs, which convert heat from a fire to electrical power that can be used to recharge batteries and power hand-held electronics, such as cell phones and cameras.

Keep an eye out for sales and take advantage of them when they come up. My local grocery store always has some things on sale for less than a dollar and I stock up on them as they come up.

Don't forget the little things like salt, pepper, relish and condiments like ketchup and mustard. Large crackers or other flatbreads store well and can be used in place of sliced bread for peanut butter and jelly. Instant milk and beverage powders will provide some variety, and canned vegetable drinks like V8 will maintain a balanced diet while also helping you get your daily two gallons of water.

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

When picking a place for your emergency pantry, whatever scenario you are considering, the place you choose is very important.

Make sure you choose a dry, cool, dark place to help preserve the food you store there.

Also, choose a place that is easy to get to; you may want to consider storing your foodstuffs in

PROS AND CONS

METHOD	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	BEST SCENARIO(S)
Canned	✓ Has its own water ✓ Already cooked, so it can be eaten straight from the can ✓ It's what you are used to eating ✓ More filling than other methods	✓ Heavy packaging ✓ Difficult to transport in bulk ✓ You need a couple of can openers on hand	✓ Shelter-in-place at home ✓ Established retreat or bug-out location
Freeze-Dried	✓ Looks like "real" food, just dried ✓ Retains more of its flavor than dehydrated variant ✓ Lighter weight and less bulk ✓ Stores well for a long time	✓ Requires a ready supply of drinkable water to prepare the food ✓ Some people may have trouble tolerating it	✓ On the move from one location to another ✓ Anywhere that you have a ready supply of drinkable water
Dehydrated	✓ Lighter weight and less bulk ✓ Stores well for a long time	✓ Requires a ready supply of drinkable water to prepare the food ✓ Does not look like "real" food, dried up in appearance ✓ Some people may have trouble tolerating it	✓ On the move from one location to another ✓ Anywhere that you have a ready supply of drinkable water

PHOTO BY LARRY SCHWARTZ

You can acutally generate enough heat to cook using tea candles!

PHOTO BY LARRY SCHWARTZ

The P-38 can opener is probably the most useful thing the U.S. Army ever created. This is a great addition to any pantry.

more than one location so that if one is compromised, you won't have lost everything.

ROTATION, ROTATION, ROTATION

Regardless of how long you plan for your pantry to last, over time, the food in it will get old and you will need to replace it.

The best strategy for avoiding this is to integrate your emergency pantry with your regular food pantry. As you use food from your regular pantry, replace it with the oldest food from your emergency store. When you go grocery shopping, put the long-term foodstuffs that you buy back into your emergency pantry. This way, your emergency pantry doesn't go out of date and it contains the types of food that your stomach is used to.

Organize your emergency pantry to make it easy to add new foodstuffs and use the older foodstuffs. If your pantry is flush-mounted to the wall, use a system of adding from the left and taking from the right. Leave space behind your shelves to allow you to add new food from the back while taking older stuff out of the front of the shelves as you normally would. Mount your shelves perpendicularly to the wall so that there are aisles between them that enable you to put from one side and take from the other as needed.

IN CONCLUSION

To be successful in your pantry efforts, remember to design it to meet the needs of each situation, buy your foodstuffs when they are on sale to keep your costs down, buy the things that your family normally eats and is used to and store it all in a cool, dry place with a shelving system that makes it easy to rotate new stock in while taking older stock out. ASG

DON'T FORGET

- ✓ Salt, pepper, relish and condiments
- ✓ Peanut butter and jelly
- ✓ Large crackers/flat-breads to use instead of bread
- ✓ Instant milk and beverage powders
- ✓ Canned vegetable drinks

START

A NEW BEGINNING

FIVE GREAT WAYS TO GET STARTED PREPPING

BY LARRY SCHWARTZ

THE REAL QUESTION FOR PREPPERS ISN'T WHAT YOU KNOW BUT WHAT YOU DON'T.

Not everyone reading this magazine has been doing this for a long time, so we decided to present some crucial info for the "newbies." Becoming self-sufficient is a process, and there are a lot of things to take into consideration, but you've got to start somewhere, right?

Even if you feel you're ready to take on anything that comes your way, check out this piece and make sure there's nothing you've overlooked. After all, being prepared is what it's all about.

"STARTING YOUR PREPARATIONS WITH THE END IN MIND CAN BE OVERWHELMING."

SEEK AND FIND

First things, first: Read as much as you can—on forums, in magazines and books, online—on any subject you're interested in prepping for, be it homesteading, wilderness survival or a full-on EOTWAWKI (end of the world as we know it) situation.

Participate in online forums and discussions to contribute your personal insights but also to gauge the effectiveness of your thoughts against those of others in the prepper community. Make sure you learn prepper acronyms too; they contain some key concepts you need to know and understand.

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

Form your own opinions about what you read and see if it makes sense for your situation. If it does, learn it, practice it and incorporate it.

START SMALL

Starting your preparations with the end in mind can be overwhelming. How are you going to get a year's worth of food and water in place in short order, and where are you going to put it all? The answer is to not do it all at once. Set aside an unused closet as your emergency pantry. Over the course of a few months, stock it with enough of the food you normally eat to last you for a month, which will cover you for most emergencies or natural disasters. From there, you can move on to six months, if that's part of your overall plan, and then build from there.

Do what you can based on your resources. You shouldn't put yourself in a financial bind because there are always inexpensive ways to do what you want to do. You don't need the most expensive camping gear for your bug-out bag, you probably don't need to build an underground bunker to keep your family safe for the situations you are preparing for and you can put together a year's worth of food with cans and boxes from the supermarket when they are on sale rather than spending a few thousand dollars on buckets of dehydrated food.

When asked what to start with first, M.D. Creekmore, author of "Three Things Every Newbie Survivalist Should Have" said, "It's a question I hear a lot from new preppers: 'What should I buy first and where do I start?' And while there are a lot of different answers depending on individual situations and needs, usually, my recommendation to those starting out is to start a food-storage program and to buy a good water filter and a dual-purpose firearm for foraging and protection."

BASICS TO KEEP IN MIND

Murphy's Law: If something can go wrong, it will go wrong, in the worst possible way and at the worst possible time. So, always be ready with an alternative way to handle the situation that just went FUBAR on you.

Adapt, improvise, overcome: The unofficial motto of the Marine Corps. When things don't go the way you planned, take the initiative and adapt your approach, improvise with what is at hand and overcome that challenge you are facing.

You should always be learning new skills and refining the ones you have to ensure you are prepared for whatever situation you may face.

PRACTICE

Most people read a lot of information on preparedness and survival and think that reading about it will be enough. In reality, practical experience is key and is the first step to real, useful knowledge. You need to actually use your skills in some way to make sure you can do what you think you can and to learn the little details and insights that you only get from actually doing something. For example, realizing how difficult it is to actually carry your 50-pound bug-out bag the

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

" … MY RECOMMENDATION TO THOSE STARTING OUT IS TO START A FOOD-STORAGE PROGRAM AND TO BUY A GOOD WATER FILTER AND A DUAL-PURPOSE FIREARM FOR FORAGING AND PROTECTION."

—M.D. CREEKMORE, AUTHOR OF "THREE THINGS EVERY NEWBIE SURVIVALIST SHOULD HAVE"

PREPPER JARGON

Prepping and survival are filled with abbreviations and acronyms that you may not know. Here are some of the most common ones and what they mean:

BOB: Bug-out bag. A bag, duffel or pack containing the basics of personal survival (food, water, shelter, protection, first aid) used when "bugging out" or evacuating one location for another, often a BOL.

BOL: Bug-out location. Where you go to when you leave a location that you cannot sustain yourself in; a personal retreat that is safe and stocked for emergencies.

BOV: Bug-out vehicle. Often your personal vehicle, but it is sometimes a dedicated one with extra gear in it to help you get to your BOL.

Bug in: To stay in place during a disaster or emergency rather than bugging out to another location.

Bug out: Leave a location to move to another where you will be safer or better equipped to survive an emergency or disaster.

EDC: Everyday carry. The things that you carry with you every day, often a small pack with your daily essentials and survival/preparedness gear but also what you carry in your pockets, such as a pocket knife, flashlight and other minimal survival gear.

FAK: First-aid kit.

FUBAR: Fouled (or some other F) up beyond all recognition.

GHB: Get-home bag. A BOB designed to get you home from work or other nearby location.

GOOD: Get out of Dodge. Another term for a bug out or evacuating the area.

OPSEC: Operational security. Keeping your mouth shut, not letting people outside of your core group know what your preparations are and what you have. In an emergency, if people know you have what they need, they may try to take it from you.

SHTF: Sh*t hits the fan. When the worst happens.

TEOTWAWKI: The end of the world as we know it. Similar to SHTF but in reference to a significant disaster, either natural, social or economic.

WROL: Without rule of law. When the police are overtaxed and cannot help you, or when people no longer worry about what is illegal and focus on taking what they want or need.

WWL: World without law. Same as WROL.

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

Skills that others may need, such as carpentry or car repair, can be bartered for the things that you don't have or can't do yourself.

BARTERING IS GOOD

When there is a shortage of anything, having more of it than you need can be a good thing, and that goes for material goods as well as skills or knowledge.

Items you can barter with:

- Water
- Ammunition, especially if it is a common size
- Medical supplies
- Fuel
- Food

Skills that you can barter with:

- Carpentry
- Medical and First Aid
- Auto or small-engine repairs
- Anything electrical
- Self-defense or tactical skills

10 miles to where you will meet your friends, or that you can't find your way there in the dark if you leave too late in the day, should not be left for a real emergency. Rehearse and refine your plans and skills and you'll be much better off when you really need to employ them.

NEVER STOP GROWING

A key to preparedness *and* being able to handle the unexpected is to always add to your existing skill set and learn new things to help make yourself more self-sufficient. In his book "31 Days to Survival: A Complete Plan for Emergency Preparedness," Creekmore states that new survivalists need to take stock of their skills and have a starting point to plan from and build upon. From there, they can compare their skills with what they need to know and take steps to improve themselves.

The "old skills" that our parents and grandparents considered commonplace, such as carpentry, gardening, basic wiring, hunting and fishing, are ones we seem to have forgotten in the age of technology. In emergency situations, these skills will not only serve you well, but you can use them to barter and get the resources or help you need at the time.

UNCERTAINTY IS CERTAIN

Most of us like to minimize risk and to try and be prepared for whatever we might face. Because there are so many different kinds of scenarios that we might face and Murphy's Law is our constant companion and worst enemy, having a Plan B and C in place is crucial. It's important to have at least one backup for something you depend on, such as having three ways to light a fire, keeping a backup flashlight or storing your first-aid supplies and food in multiple locations in case one collection is destroyed or damaged.

Make sure you get your family on board with your prepping plans and include them in your learning and training. Teach everyone basic first aid, show them how to use your water purification system and, if weapons are part of your overall plan, make sure they're familiar with them.

THE TAKEAWAY

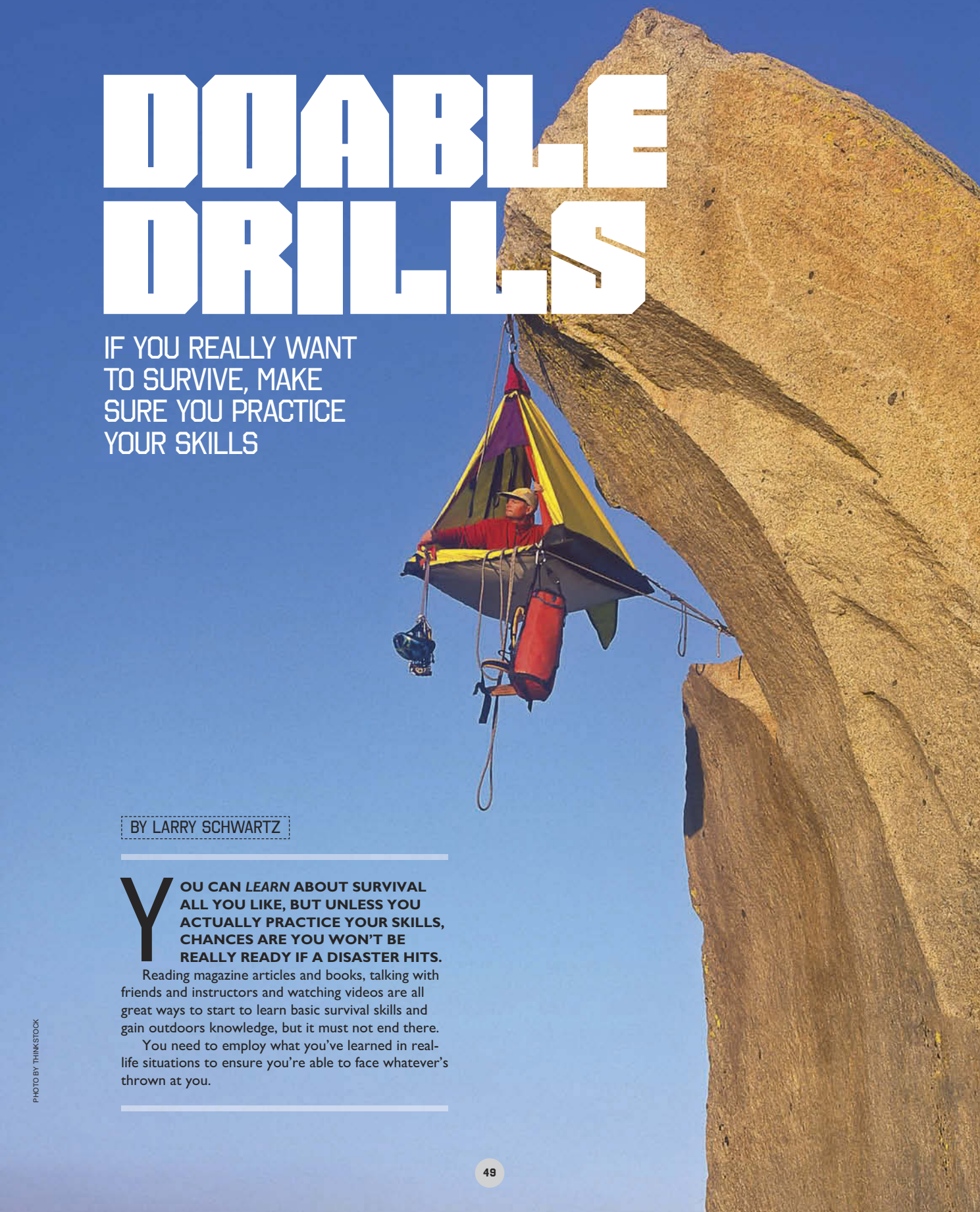
Congratulations on your decision to become more self-sufficient and to prepare to take care of yourself and those who depend on you in whatever future situations you face. Keep in mind that if you approach situations calmly and knowledgeably, there are few challenges that you can't overcome. ASG

GET GOING

▸ If you're looking for a way to get started, check out this program for getting your house in order over the course of 12 months: www.backdoorsurvival.com/12-months-of-prepping-year-one/.

DOABLE DRILLS

IF YOU REALLY WANT TO SURVIVE, MAKE SURE YOU PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS



BY LARRY SCHWARTZ

YOU CAN *LEARN* ABOUT SURVIVAL ALL YOU LIKE, BUT UNLESS YOU ACTUALLY PRACTICE YOUR SKILLS, CHANCES ARE YOU WON'T BE REALLY READY IF A DISASTER HITS.

Reading magazine articles and books, talking with friends and instructors and watching videos are all great ways to start to learn basic survival skills and gain outdoors knowledge, but it must not end there.

You need to employ what you've learned in real-life situations to ensure you're able to face whatever's thrown at you.

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

"DON'T TRY A NEW SKILL FOR THE FIRST TIME 10 MILES FROM YOUR CAR ON A MOUNTAIN TRAIL."

STAGES OF COMPETENCY

A theory of learning called the Four Stages of Competence came about in the 1970s and states that people progress through four stages of learning any new skill. The stages include unconsciously incompetent (you don't know you can't do something and don't know enough to realize what you don't know), consciously incompetent (you know just enough to realize you don't know enough about the topic), consciously competent (you know how to do the skill, but it takes effort each time) and unconsciously competent (you have been practicing the skill over time, and it comes naturally).

When you learn something new, like when you read an article about building shelters or watch a video on fire making, you are in stage one, unconsciously incompetent. Your goal should always be to move from that stage to stage four, unconsciously competent, as soon as possible.

ABOVE, LEFT: Practicing how to make a fire can come in mighty handy when it's an emergency situation and you know how to get it done.

ABOVE, RIGHT: Learning how to use a map and compass can go a long way toward helping you get where you need to be should the grid go down.

A SUCCESS STORY

After spending a few days on his Boy Scout camping trip, a 12-year-old boy got homesick and decided he was going to walk to the "nearby" road and then hitchhike home. Unfortunately for him, he headed the wrong way and wound up lost for two days in the state park where they were camping. But fortunately for him, his Boy Scout training served him well; he knew to dress for the weather and had on a fleece and windbreaker, he knew to keep moving to help stay warm and he knew to drink from the safe water sources in the area to stay hydrated.

Keeping his head and using the skills that he had learned and practiced with his troop kept him safe until rescuers found him safe—although a little confused and hungry—the following day.

SOME THINGS TO PRACTICE

- Sheltering in place at home
- Moving to your bug-out location
- Cooking when you don't have any electricity or propane
- Using your first-aid training to splint a broken leg
- Using your new water filtration pump
- Getting from point A to point B using nothing but your map and compass
- Setting up a ground-to-air signal
- Building a fire
- Setting up a shelter using just a plain tarp

SCENARIOS

The best way to find out how much you have learned, and how well you have learned it, is to actually go out and use that new-found knowledge in a practice scenario.

Don't try a new skill for the first time 10 miles from your car on a mountain trail. It's fine to try out your new skills in a realistic environment; just take it easy and try out your new skills in your backyard or at a local campsite. You can accompany an experienced friend on a backpacking trip and have him or her mentor you as you try out some of your new skills; maybe you

PRACTICAL PRACTICE

- Try out your skills in your backyard or at a local campsite.
- Go on a backpacking trip with a mentor.
- Take classes that offer hands-on practice.
- Spend a night in the woods with your personal survival kit.
- Have a weekend at home sans electricity and water.

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

GRAPHICS BY LARRY SCHWARTZ

"YOU NEED TO EMPLOY WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED IN REAL-LIFE SITUATIONS TO ENSURE YOU'RE ABLE TO FACE WHATEVER'S THROWN AT YOU."

NOT SO SUCCESSFUL

A 36-year-old, experienced hunter had to be rescued by the state search and rescue team after being lost for 24 hours in North Carolina's Appalachian Mountains. When found, the rescuers saw that he had a map and compass on him. When the SAR team leader asked him why he couldn't find his way out, the man replied that he had always carried a compass with him but had never used it and couldn't figure out how to when he realized he was lost. He had left information with his girlfriend regarding when to expect him back, and she called search and rescue, which saved his life.

could build the campfire for that night or do the map and compass work to get you to the campsite. You can also take classes that include hands-on practice in what you want to accomplish. One of my favorite approaches is to spend a night in the woods with just what you plan to carry on your person as your personal survival kit to see how well it works.

A fun, family way to practice is to have an "1890s weekend": turn off the electricity and water in the house and see what it would be like to live without those luxuries.

PRACTICE MUSTS

However you decide to practice using your new knowledge, you should try out everything you plan to do in your survival or prepping scenarios, no matter how trivial it might seem. Only through actually using that skill or exercising that plan can you ensure that it will work. And by actually using the skill, you reveal the hidden challenges that you hadn't thought about, such as how it's better to use flint and steel to start your fire instead of a lighter or match when it's windy, or that you need a manual can opener to get into cans of food stored in your basement emergency pantry.

THE CHALLENGE

Each of us has planned how we would handle situations if things got bad, but many of us have never tried them out. Practicing those plans ensures that you keep your skills fresh and will be able able to protect and provide for yourself and those who depend on you.

Life is always changing, as are its challenges, so we should all keep our knowledge-base current to be prepared for whatever the future brings. ASC

SHOW TIME

THE DENVER SELF RELIANCE EXPO OFFERED SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

BY WES PARKER | PHOTOS COURTESY OF COLORADO AQUAPONICS

THE DENVER SELF RELIANCE EXPO, HOSTED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL SELF RELIANCE ORGANIZATION, RON DOUGLAS, WAS A PREPPER'S PARADISE.

Everywhere we looked, there was a new product, a handy device or a cool presentation going on, and attendees looked thrilled to be checking out the latest and greatest self-reliance items.

OF NOTE

One exhibitor, JD Sawyer of Colorado Aquaponics, was of particular interest to our staff. When Sawyer lost his corporate job, he wanted a change, so he decided to do something that would give back to the community, feed a family and create a sustainable business. Sawyer focused on the concept of bio-integrating growing fish and plants together, and in collaboration with GrowHaus—an urban farm and marketplace in northeast Denver—built an aquaponics sys-

HOW IT WORKS

> Fish are raised in a tank.
> Water from the fish tank is pumped to the plants.
> Naturally occurring bacteria convert ammonia and nitrite to nitrate.
> Plants absorb the nutrient-rich water.
> Filtered water is returned to the fish tank, clean.

tem that does just that. We got the details from him, so follow along to see how things work.

THE FACTS

Aquaponics is a mixture of aquaculture (farming aquatic species in a controlled environment) and hydroponics (growing plants in a soil-less medium).

"In a nutshell, aquaponics recirculates water from a fish tank through a vegetable grow bed. Nutrients from the fish waste feed the plants, and the plants filter the water to keep the fish healthy," Sawyer says.

Aquaponics offers improvements over traditional soil-based farming, which often requires extensive water, pesticides, fertilizer, tilling and weeding, eventually resulting in fallow soils and harmful byproducts from chemicals and wastewater.

"Aquaponic systems can be built both inside and outside, and smaller units can also easily be built and operated inside the home, which offers a mighty convenient family food source," Sawyer reports.

Basically, the system grows more food with less water while providing constant nutrients and producing zero waste. How's that for a win-win situation?

THE PRODUCTS

Sawyer says that all of Colorado Aquaponics' food travels fewer than five miles to the customer, and the beds grow squash, zucchini, cucumbers, several varieties of tomatoes and peppers, eggplant, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, beans and strawberries; these are companion planted with nasturtiums, cilantro and marigolds to help with pest control.

In addition, 1,200 square feet of deep-water culture raft beds produce roughly 800 to 1,000 heads of lettuce, kale, tatsoi, chard, mizuna, mint and basil, plus a wide variety of other salad and cooking greens, each week. Fish and bacteria make up the rest of the system: It houses Blue Nile, Mozambique, Hybrid Striped Bass and Rocky Mountain White Tilapia.

A look inside the farm at Colorado Aquaponics.

SHOW SPEAKERS

Jack Spirko: host of The Survival Podcast
David Crawford: Author and outdoorsman
Dr. Bones and Nurse Amy: Former fellow of the American College of Surgeons and certified nurse midwife and registered nurse
Maria Burnham: essential oil educator
Snake Blocker: tribal member of the Lipan Apache Tribe of Texas
Ed Hendershot: founder of MinuteManRX and Essential Survival Solutions Distribution, LLC
Travis Fox: disaster planning specialist and firearms instructor
Ralph Anderson: national award-winning alternative energy expert
Christine Faith: local backyard farmer and author of blog "Right To Thrive"
Lucinda Bailey: Texas Master Gardener

BENEFITS OF AQUAPONICS

- Significantly reduces water usage up to 90 percent, on average, over traditional farming
- Relatively low energy consumption
- Faster growth rates and yields
- Eliminates the need for weeding and tilling of soil
- No soil-borne diseases
- Plants are naturally fertilized
- No pesticides or chemicals
- Fish are a healthy source of protein
- No waste-water run-off in recirculating systems
- Systems can be established locally minimizing "food miles"

IN CONCLUSION

The American Survival Guide staff enjoyed the show immensely and found some great new products that we've featured in this issue. We talked to a lot of attendees at the show and asked why they came. We ran into people from all walks of life—some were newbies, attending just to "find out more," and some were seasoned preppers, scouring the booths for the latest and greatest stuff to bolster their survival caches. Regardless the reason, everyone seemed to be having a great time, and we're looking forward to Douglas' spring show in April at Texas' Mesquite Convention Center. ASG

NSRO UPCOMING EVENTS

April 4-5, 2014: Self Reliance Expo at Mesquite Convention Center, Mesquite, Texas
Nov. 7-8, 2014: Self Reliance Expo at National Western Complex, Denver

AQUAPONICS INFO CONTACT:
http://www.coloradoaquaponics.com

NSRO INFO CONTACT:
Website: www.thensro.com • **Phone:** (877) 618-0065

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

CRISIS CONTROL

EXERCISES TO TEACH YOU HOW TO COPE IN A CATASTROPHE

BY THOMAS J. NARDI, PH.D.

THE WORD CRISIS CAN CONJURE UP IMAGES OF NATURAL DISASTERS AS WELL AS BLOODY VIOLENT RAMPAGES BY A DERANGED SHOOTER.

Your definition of a "crisis" will be a very significant factor in how you react to one. Indeed, the way you think about a crisis may even determine your very ability to survive. Within your mind lies the key to meeting and overcoming a crisis.

DANGER—OPPORTUNITY

The Chinese word for crisis consists of two ideograms: "danger" and "opportunity." Most of us recognize the danger in a crisis but few recognize the opportunity. While the danger is often quite apparent, the opportunity is more subtle, and yet, it can be a determing factor in your ability to overcome the crisis.

The opportunity to be found in the crisis lies in whether you utilize your mind to control your emotions, behaviors and destiny. If used correctly, your mind will allow you to emerge from the crisis a stronger and emotionally healthier person. If used incorrectly, your mind can be your worst enemy. It can do even more damage than the crisis itself.

PHYSICAL CHANGES IN CRISIS

- Blood pressure increases
- Heart beats faster
- Decreased blood flow to arms and legs
- Body becomes less sensitive to pain or injury
- The perception of time passing changes
- Seem to move in slow motion
- Tunnel vision can develop

SIMPLE PHYSIOLOGY

When your mind perceives danger, your sympathetic nervous system is activated. With its activation, a series of physiological changes are set in motion. The greater the threat of danger, the faster and stronger the changes will be.

These changes take place automatically, without conscious effort on your part, as your body springs into action preparing to meet the threat. Your blood pressure will increase as your heart beats faster. Blood flow to the arms and legs will decrease. You will be less sensitive to pain or injury. Your perception of time passing will change. Things may appear to be moving in slow motion. Under extreme stress, you may even develop tunnel vision, which means you're

literally unable to see what is going on around you as your visual field narrows upon the threat.

Your body is, in effect, preparing to either run away from the crisis or to face it. Thus, this physiological reaction of the autonomic nervous system is often referred to as the "fight or flight" mechanism. The crisis has triggered a physical change in your body that will better enable you to flee from the danger or to fight back against it.

Once the danger has been met or once it has passed, the parasympathetic nervous system is activated. This reverses the fight or flight process. Your body then returns to normal. Your heart rate, blood pressure, etc., all return to what they were before the crisis occurred.

For a specific crisis or threat, the fight or flight mechanism can be a literal lifesaver. Unfortunately, today, many crises are prolonged, possibly lasting days, weeks or even longer. The parasympathetic nervous system cannot do its job because you are forced to stay in the fight or flight mode. What is designed to be a life-saving process can now become a threat to your health if your body is not able to experience the relief provided by the parasympathetic nervous system. That is the bad news: You cannot control the duration or severity of the crisis.

The good news is that you *can* control how you react to the crisis. There are simple mind-body exercises you can do to minimize the impact of any crisis you encounter. Indeed, these exercises provide an opportunity to overcome a crisis when you do not have the choice of fighting or fleeing.

IT'S ALL IN YOUR HEAD

The messages you give yourself will determine how well or how poorly you deal with the crisis. Negative messages yield negative results. Telling yourself repeatedly how bad a situation is, or how you can't stand it, will only serve to make yourself worse. By contrast, telling yourself, "Yes, it's bad, *but* I will cope with it," or, "I *can* and I *will* stand it," will empower you.

Just as what we tell ourselves about the crisis can determine how we feel and behave, so, too, does what we tell ourselves about our own reaction. The fight or flight mechanism is the body's natural way of preparing to meet a threat.

Some people, however, misread their own reactions. As they feel their heart racing, they interpret it as a negative, as something detrimental. They conclude that they are helplessly overwhelmed by fear because of what they are feeling. They do not realize that what they are feeling is a perfectly normal reaction. And, the more they think of themselves as helpless, the stronger their mind perceives the threat to be, and the stronger the fight or flight reaction becomes. In effect, their minds create a negative feedback loop. They become caught in a vicious cycle that feeds off itself. They are telling themselves how horrible it is to feel the way they feel, and this makes them feel even more helpless.

If they were to change the messages they are telling themselves, they would not only be a lot calmer but also better able to deal with the crisis. For example, consider the message, "My heart's racing—I can't cope," versus, "My heart's racing so that I will have the energy to cope."

DO, DON'T STEW

When faced with a crisis, remember that panicking and worrying never accomplish anything. Pause. Slow down. Instead of worrying, think of possible responses and decide the best course of action. Take a tip from the great chess masters. They say, "When you see a good move, look for a better one." Take your time in considering and deciding your options.

Rather than viewing the physical sensations of fight or flight as indications of a panic, learn to view it as your mind and body providing you with a better opportunity for successful action.

JUST SIT THERE

Ironically, sometimes the best cause of action in a crisis is to do nothing.

When dealing with a crisis, we often see people rushing aimlessly in a panic. It is very easy to get caught up in agitated driven behavior. Rushing around may give the illusion of accomplishing something, but it is generally counterproductive.

Before you rush off mindlessly, try this simple meditation technique: Sit quietly with your eyes closed. Put your attention on your feet. Think of them relaxing. Visualize the muscles relaxing. Then move onto your calves, thighs, hips, stomach and chest. Take your time, staying with each area until you feel the muscle group relaxing. Then, focus on your face, neck, shoulders and arms. Finally, spend a few minutes enjoying the feeling of relief provided by the relaxation. You are actually aiding the parasympathetic nervous system to facilitate relaxation and calmness. It will probably take several attempts before you reach your optimal level of relaxation. Don't get discouraged. Success will come with practice. And don't wait for a crisis to try this. Build up your ability to relax by practicing *before* a crisis occurs.

PROFESSIONAL HELP

Don't be afraid to admit that you need help. There is no shame in recognizing that some outside help is needed. Trained professionals can often provide the additional support you might need to get through a crisis as well as support afterward. Cognitive-behavior therapy in particular provides a short-term approach that has proven to be effective in helping those faced with crises.

BREATHE

When facing a crisis or any challenge, try this simple breathing exercise: Sit or stand quietly where you won't be disturbed for a few minutes. Exhale slowly and deeply. As you exhale, pull in your stomach muscles. Try to imagine someone squeezing your midsection to force all the air out of you. When you feel all the air has been expelled, blow out one more breath.

Now, inhale as slowly as possible through your nose and begin to expand your abdominal area. Visualize your lower abdominal area and your chest filling with oxygen, then, expand your rib cage and pull back your shoulders. When you are at your maximum capacity, hold the breath for about five seconds.

Slowly exhale through your mouth. Repeat the entire sequence three times. Don't be fooled by the simplicity of this breathing exercise; it is very effective. It can relax or energize you, depending on what your body needs at that moment.

YOU'RE IN CONTROL

We cannot control external events. A crisis by its very nature is often an unforeseen and unpredictable situation that explodes upon us. But we need not be helpless in a crisis. We have the power and ability to decide how we respond to the crisis. Always remember that everything you need to survive is within you. Your mind is your own crisis-control center. ASC

Thomas J. Nardi, Ph.D., is the director of the counseling programs at Long Island University Hudson Graduate Centers in Orangeburg, N.Y., and West Point. Dr. Nardi is a licensed psychologist and the creator of Eclectic Cognitive Behavior Therapy.

BINOCULARS

SEEING CLEARLY

FOCUS ON THE BENEIFTS OF A GOOD PAIR OF BINOCULARS

BINOCULARS ARE OFTEN OVERLOOKED as a key element in a survival tool kit. Sure, water, food and fire-starting supplies take precedence, but a decent pair of binoculars can literally be a lifesaving addition to your pack.

Chances are, if you're in a survival situation, you might be forced into unfamiliar territory. Misreading unknown terrain cannot only waste valuable time, it can also put you in jeopardy. Without proper navigation, you risk unknowingly entering into dangerous terrain or putting yourself in the path of violent adversaries or animals.

With a good pair of binoculars, you can better assess your surroundings and navigate a path to safety. They can also enable scouting for wildlife and other potential food sources, as well as fresh water and places to camp. And, in a pinch, binoculars can be used to start fires using refracted sunlight. So, when building a go bag or replenishing your survival kit, look into adding a pair of binoculars.

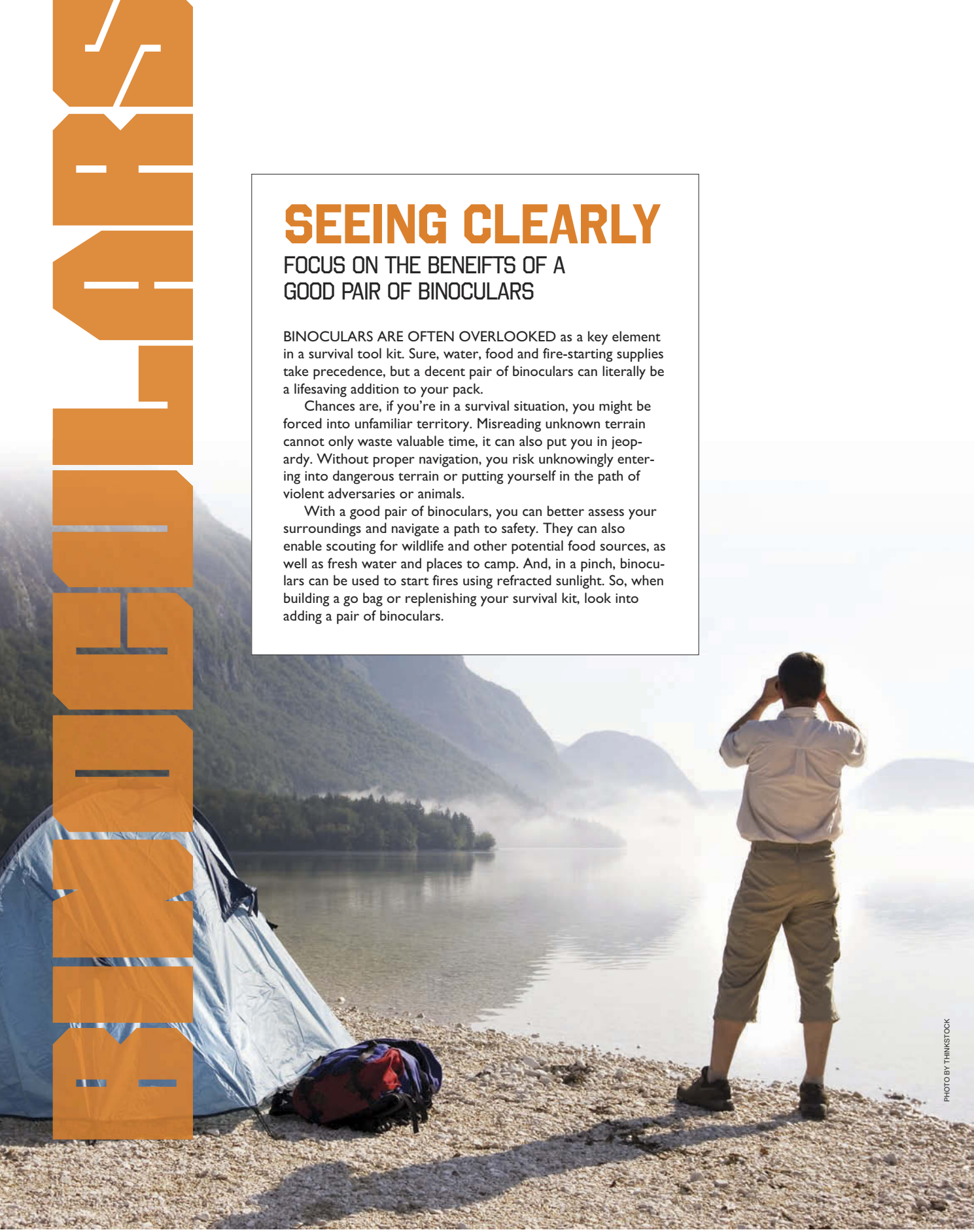


PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

"THE ERGONOMIC DESIGN ALLOWS FOR BETTER COMFORT AND EASIER USAGE."

CANON
$399.99

1 CANON

Model: Canon 8x25 IS Binoculars
www.canon.com
MSRP: $399.99

Key Features: Compact, lightweight, Image Stabilization

Description: Canon's 8x25 IS binoculars introduce image stabilization to the most popular size of binoculars. Claimed by Canon to be the world's smallest and lightest IS binoculars, the prism lenses feature a high-efficiency Tilt-System Image Stabilizer. The ergonomic design allows for better comfort and easier usage. The binoculars contain high-quality, all-glass Canon optics with Super Spectra Coating for excellent sharpness and contrast.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"Extremely compact and lightweight, the 8x25 IS introduces a new kind of Image Stabilization to the most popular size of binoculars."* —CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

"... ONE OF THE BEST WATERPROOF BINOCULARS FOR THE MONEY."

BUSHNELL OUTDOOR PRODUCTS
$69.95-$173.95

2 BUSHNELL OUTDOOR PRODUCTS

Model: H20 Binoculars
www.bushnell.com
MSRP: $69.95 - $173.95

Key Features: Waterproof, soft-texture grip, fog-proof

Description: Bushnell has recently redesigned its popular H20 binocular line to include refreshed key features. The H20 series binoculars are O-ringed sealed and nitrogen purged, offering outdoor enthusiasts 100-percent waterproof and fog-proof performance. The durable, rubber-coated chassis has been enhanced with a new soft-texture grip that provides added reassurance in inclement weather. The revamped design features BaK-4 prisms, and multi-coated optics deliver maximum light transmission and bright, optimal clarity at any distance. The H20 product line includes 24 items in both porro and prism models with designs that range from compact to full size.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"After 10 successful years on the market, Bushnell has refreshed key features, making the H20 one of the best waterproof binoculars for the money."* —PAUL ARHNHOLD, BUSHNELL OUTDOOR PRODUCTS

"... NIKON HAS RAISED THE STANDARD OF HOW A BINOCULAR SHOULD LOOK, FEEL AND PERFORM."

3 NIKON SPORT OPTICS

Model: MONARCH 5 10x42
www.nikon.com
MSRP: $329.95

Key Features: Extra-low dispersion glass lenses, long eye-relief, waterproof

Description: Nikon's latest MONARCH 5 features ED (extra-low dispersion) glass lenses that effectively compensate for chromatic aberrations to provide images of superior contrast and outstanding resolution. The MONARCH 5 also features Phase Correction Coatings and Dielectric High-Reflective Multilayer Prism Coatings, which help display exceptionally accurate color reproduction and a clear, natural-looking image. Built for extreme usage, the MONARCH 5 is nitrogen filled and O-ring sealed, making it completely waterproof and fog-
proof. The binocular is almost an ounce lighter than its predecessor, thanks to a lighter rubber armor material.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"With the release of the new, enhanced MONARCH 5 binocular, Nikon has raised the standard of how a binocular should look, feel and perform."* —JON LACORTE, SENIOR PRODUCT MARKETING MANAGER, NIKON SPORT OPTICS

4 BARSKA

Model: 10x42 WP Huntmaster
www.barska.com
MSRP: $285.75

Key Features: Rugged, all-weather, wide field of view

Description: Barska's 10x42 WP Huntmaster binoculars provide superior optics for all weather conditions, including rain, desert heat or subzero temperatures. Barksa's rugged, durable binoculars are designed to perform in the most extreme weather conditions. The pair features superior optics quality, phase-coated prisms, extreme close-focus distance and a wide field of view, which is ideal for outdoorsmen and survivalists alike.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"Every hunter needs a pair of binoculars that they can count on, through all weather conditions. The Huntmaster provides that comfort delivering outstanding performance."* —CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

"BARKSA'S RUGGED, DURABLE BINOCULARS ARE DESIGNED TO PERFORM IN THE MOST EXTREME WEATHER CONDITIONS."

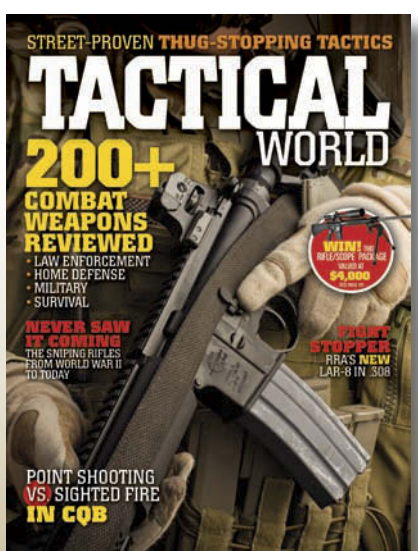
"THE FIRST TO COMBINE THE HANDLING CHARACTERISTICS OF A ROOF-PRISM BINOCULAR WITH THE PERFORMANCE AND PRICE OF A PORRO-PRISM DESIGN."

LEUPOLD & STEVENS
Model: BX-2 Acadia Binoculars
www.leupold.com
MSRP: $239.99

Key Features: Compact, lightweight, multi-coat lens system, waterproof

Description: The BX-2 Acadia has a slim, in-line roof-prism design with contemporary styling that makes them compact, lightweight and ergonomic. These binoculars are the first to combine the handling characteristics of a roof-prism binocular with the performance and price of a porro-prism design. The BX-2 Acadia features phase-coated prisms and the proprietary Multicoat 4 lens coating system, multi-coat lens system for exceptional brightness, contrast and clarity. Armored, waterproof and nitrogen filled, Leupold BX-2 Acadia binoculars are well protected against field conditions. Includes a case, quick-detach neoprene neck strap, eyepiece covers and tethered objective lens covers.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"Finding a roof-prism binocular that offered the Leupold-quality optical performance you demand and the affordability you want has been a challenge … until Leupold introduced the BX-2 Acadia Series."* —KEVIN TREPA, VICE PRESIDENT OF GLOBAL SALES



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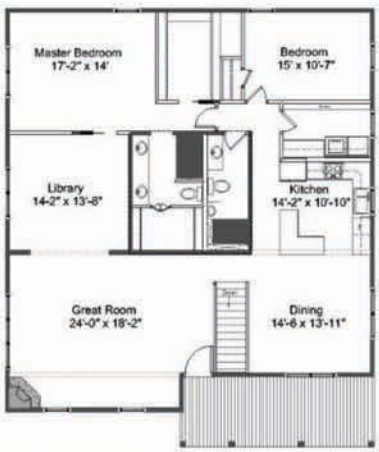

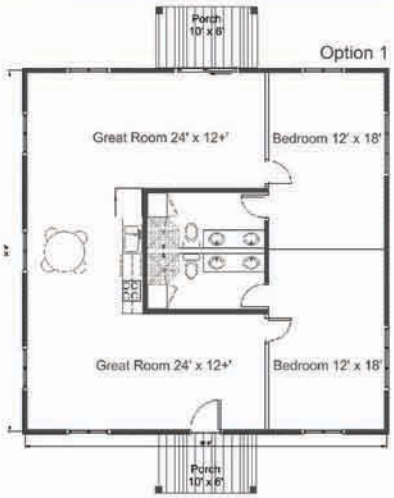

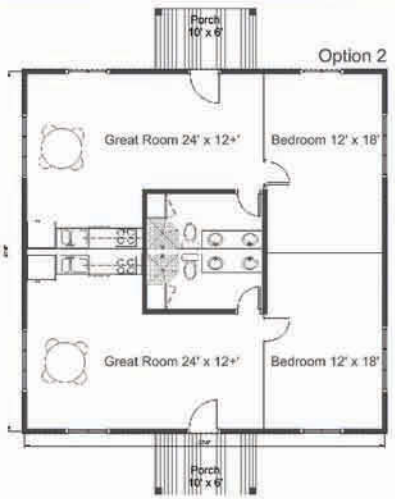

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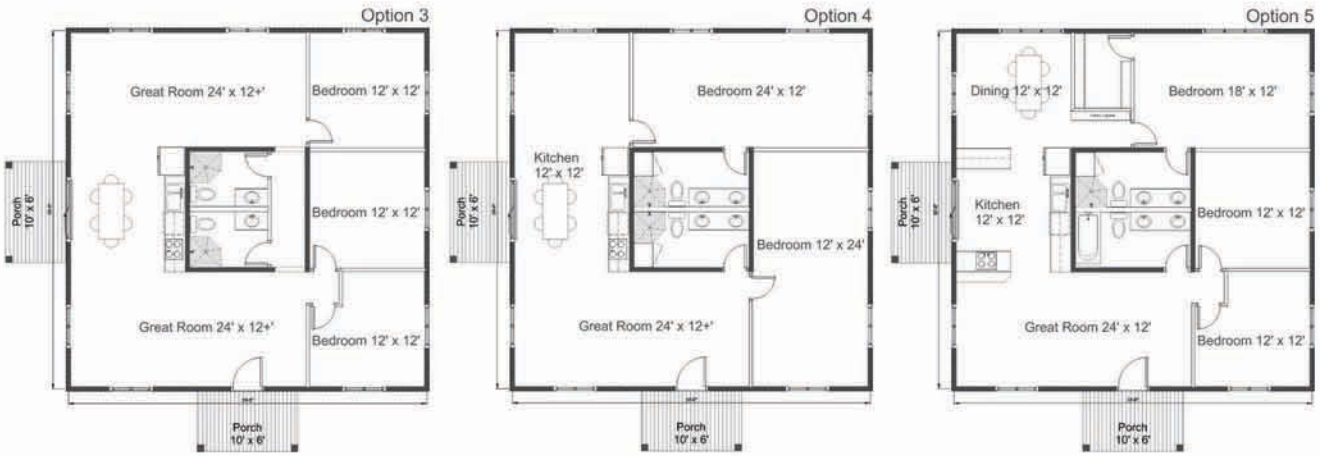

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"... DESIGNED TO ABSORB SHOCK AND PROVIDE LONG-LASTING PROTECTION IN THE FIELD."

6 BUSHNELL OUTDOOR PRODUCTS $149.99

6 BUSHNELL OUTDOOR PRODUCTS

Model: NatureView 10x42 Roof
www.bushnell.com
MSRP: $149.99

Key Features: Waterproof, fog-proof, durable rubber-armored housing

Description: Bushnell's new line of NatureVeiw binoculars features six products that span both mid- and full-size models with a combination of porro- and roof-prism configurations. The NatureView line provides edge-to-edge image clarity and outstanding detail due to BAK-4 prisms and fully multi-coated optics. Fully waterproof and fog-proof, the NatureView binoculars are protected with a durable rubber-armored housing that is designed to absorb shock and provide long-lasting protection in the field.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"Designed for wildlife and nature enthusiasts, the NatureView line enables quick adjustments, allowing nature observers to easily share binoculars."* —PAUL ARHNHOLD, BUSHNELL OUTDOOR PRODUCTS

"SPIRIT XF BINOCULARS OUTSHINE OTHER OPTICS IN ITS PRICE CLASS."

7 VANGUARD USA $199

7 VANGUARD USA

Model: Spirit XF 1042
www.vanguardworld.com
MSRP: $199

Key Features: Edge-to-edge clarity, waterproof, fog-proof, shock resistant

Description: Vanguard's Spirit XF 1042 binoculars deliver edge-to-edge clarity, high-contrast images and brilliant color reproduction due to the BaK4 roof prisms and lens coatings. Fully waterproof and fog-proof, Spirit XF is made to take on the outdoors and challenging weather with textured rubber armor for a secure grip and shock resistance. Spirit XF has a unique open bridge body design so it's lightweight, compact and comfortable to use all day without tire.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"Spirit XF binoculars outshine other optics in its price class. Spirit XF offers outstanding image quality, weather resistance and user-friendly features!"* —CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

8 REDFIELD $179.99

"... IMPECCABLE IMAGE QUALITY WITH ECONOMICAL IMPLEMENTATION."

8 REDFIELD

Model: Rebel 10x42 (#67605)
www.redfield.com
MSRP: $179.99

Key Features: Fully armored aluminum body, tripod adaptable mount, waterproof

Description: The Redfield Rebel binoculars feature fully multicoated lenses and premium BAK-4 prisms offer unrivalled brightness, resolution and edge clarity, while the armored aluminum body guarantees renowned Redfield durability. The advanced, ergonomic roof-prism design dramatically reduces bulk and weight, while the twist up/down eyecups ensure a perfect fit for users with and without eyeglasses. The enormously popular 10x42mm platform is ideal for the rugged outdoors due to the waterproof and fog-proof design.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"The Redfield Rebel binocular combines impeccable image quality with economical implementation."* —CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE ASC

HERE COMES THE SUN

FOR THE SURVIVALIST ON THE GO, PORTABLE SOLAR PANELS ARE A GREAT WAY TO POWER UP

IF YOU'RE STUCK OUT IN THE WILDERNESS, powering electronics such as cell phones, GPS devices and tablet computers can be a challenge, especially considering the lack of electrical outlets. Portable solar panels enable outdoorsmen and survivalists alike to harness the sun for the on-the-go power.

From rugged, waterproof models that can directly charge a smartphone to robust systems that can store energy for multiple electronics, the sun can generate power in both everyday and survival instances.

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

1 POWERTRAVELLER LIMITED

Model: Solarmonkey Adventurer
www.outdoortactical.com
(U.S. distributor)
MSRP: $135

Key Features: Internal battery; slim-line; auto-load, self-sensing switching technology

Description: The Solarmonkey Adventurer features an internal battery that, in optimum light conditions, can be charged by the solar panels in just eight to 12 hours. The Adventurer is a slim-line, compact, two-panel solar charger with a 2500mAh internal lithium polymer battery. The clamshell design features two solar panels with a 3-watt maximum output. The Adventurer can continue to charge itself and other devices efficiently in low-light conditions thanks to the maximum power point tracker (MPPT) technology within the unit. The Adventurer features auto-load, self-sensing switching technology—when a device is connected, the adventurer will automatically start to charge the device and optimize the charging parameters. The protective case includes integral fixings, straps and a carabineer so that the Adventurer can be firmly secured to a backpack to recharge the internal battery unit while on the go. The top half of the case features a netted storage area for cables and other supplies, and the tough, waterproof zipper keeps everything protected.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"The Solarmonkey Adventurer is perfect for keeping 5V devices such as cell phones, GPS and other essential lines of communications open whilst you are off the beaten track and away from AC mains power."* —VICKI PARLOUR, E-COMMERCE AND MARKETING MANAGER

"THE ADVENTURER CAN CONTINUE TO CHARGE ITSELF AND OTHER DEVICES EFFICIENTLY IN LOW-LIGHT CONDITIONS ..."

1 POWERTRAVELLER LIMITED
$135

2 GOAL ZERO

Model: Yeti 150
www.goalzero.com
MSRP: $199.99

Key Features: Delivers 150-watt hours of power, can be fully recharged by sun in 24 hours

Description: Goal Zero's Yeti 150 Solar Generator offers a clean and quiet solution for adventurers looking to keep a campsite lit and connected or families that want to be prepared for emergency situations. The Yeti 150 Solar Generator provides 50 hours of light, 15 smartphone recharges, six tablet recharges or two laptop recharges. Weighing in at just 12 pounds, Yeti 150 is Goal Zero's smallest solar generator but still delivers 150-watt hours of power via two 12V ports, a USB port and an AC port. The Yeti 150 can be fully recharged in 24 hours of full sun with the Nomad 13 Solar Panel or just five hours by plugging it into a wall outlet.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"The only plug-and-play solar generator for emergencies, camping or wherever you need power. The Goal Zero Yeti 150 Solar Generator is a gas-free source of portable power to keep lights, phones and laptops powered on through any situation."* —LISA JANSSEN, GOAL ZERO SPOKESPERSON

2 GOAL ZERO
$199.99

"THE YETI 150 SOLAR GENERATOR PROVIDES 50 HOURS OF LIGHT, 15 SMARTPHONE RECHARGES, SIX TABLET RECHARGES OR TWO LAPTOP RECHARGES."

3 POWERFILM, INC.

Model: R21 Rollable Solar Charger
www.powerfilmsolar.com
MSRP: $328.99

Key Features: Rollable, waterproof, lightweight at 1.4 pounds

Description: The PowerFilm R21 is a rollable, lightweight, durable and extremely portable solar panel. The solar panels are fully waterproof and constructed with marine-grade connectors to provide a portable solar solution for marine environments. Unmatched durability allows for use in even the harshest environments, and PowerFilm's proprietary processes produces a panel that works even after being punctured, although the puncturing will affect the ability of the solar panel to repel water. The R21 comes with a wide range of connectors for a variety of electronic devices.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"With its high durability and portability, the R21 solar charger is a must have in keeping your electronics powered up while when you are off the grid. Being fully encapsulated with marine-grade connections makes it useable in weather conditions, rain or shine."* —RON MASON, VICE PRESIDENT OF SALES AND MARKETING

"BEING FULLY ENCAPSULATED WITH MARINE-GRADE CONNECTIONS MAKES IT USEABLE IN WEATHER CONDITIONS, RAIN OR SHINE."

3 POWERFILM, INC.
$328.99

4 BUSHNELL OUTDOOR PRODUCTS

Model: PowerSync Solar Wrap
www.bushnell.com/all-products/outdoor-technology/powersync
MSRP: $59.99 – $299.99

Key Features: Power on demand, rollable, compact, lightweight

Description: Bushnell's PowerSync line features two lightweight, rugged and portable solar panel products that provide power on demand via a simple plug-and-play USB port. More durable and portable than rigid crystalline panels, PowerSync features a rollable or foldable design that provides more solar surface area at less weight. The SolarWrap, available with an extended and standard-length solar panel (models 400 and 250) as well as a mini model, offers solar capability in a rollable design that stows in a compact cylindrical case. Redundant wiring throughout the solar panel allows each cell to collect energy independently, meaning a damaged cell won't diminish the overall performance. Bushnell outfitted the PowerSync solar line with advanced amorphous silicon thin-film solar technology that performs in less than full sunlight and collects energy more efficiently than the crystalline products on the market.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"Whether it's a weekend in the woods or the backcountry hunt of a lifetime, the fact of the matter is, more and more people are taking portable electronics into the outdoors. From recharging a smart phone to powering up a satellite phone in the backcountry, PowerSync was developed to power those off-the-grid adventures."* —PAUL ARNHOL, BUSHNELL OUTDOOR PRODUCTS

"FROM RECHARGING A SMART PHONE TO POWERING UP A SATELLITE PHONE IN THE BACKCOUNTRY, POWERSYNC WAS DEVELOPED TO POWER THOSE OFF-THE-GRID ADVENTURES."

4 BUSHNELL OUTDOOR PRODUCTS
$59.99-$299.99

5 SUNREADY POWER

Model: SR10 Suncase
www.sunreadypower.com
MSRP: $795

Key Features: Self-contained, rugged, set up in minutes

Description: Sunready Power portable solar systems are completely self-contained with solar panels, controls, batteries and AC inverters in one rugged case or trunk. The units set up in minutes and provide electrical power during the day or at night with the internal batteries. The SR10 can be used to recharge multiple cell phones or radio batteries. Using efficient LED lights, the SR10 can provide many hours of night lighting via a 5 Vdc USB and a 12 Vdc outlet.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"For survivalists, the most important needs for electricity are for maintaining communications and nighttime lighting. In a disaster or survival situation, a little electricity can go a long way to ensure your safety and security."* —JOHN WENNSTROM, SUNREADY POWER

6 VOLTAIC SYSTEMS

Model: Fuse 4W Solar Charger
www.voltaicsystems.com
MSRP: $129

Key Features: Waterproof, lightweight, rugged

Description: Voltaic Systems' 4W Solar Charger is a lightweight, rugged portable solar panel that enables easy charging for electronics on the go. The charger features two 2-watt, waterproof solar panels that can fully charge a typical cell phone in just five hours; one hour provides about 1.5 hours of talk time. The included battery charges efficiently from the solar panels and stores power for use anytime. When not in the sun, it can be charged using the USB Power Cable or optional AC travel charger or DC car charger, making it just as useful on the grid as off.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"The Fuse 4W Solar Charger is a lightweight way to add solar and battery power to any bag. It connects in seconds to bags, tents, bicycles and pretty much anyplace else you might need solar power."* —SHARON BRIND, VOLTAIC SPOKESPERSON

"IN A DISASTER OR SURVIVAL SITUATION, A LITTLE ELECTRICITY CAN GO A LONG WAY TO ENSURE YOUR SAFETY AND SECURITY."

7 ARC SOLAR SYSTEMS

Model: SPG-3000
www.arcsolarsystems.com
MSRP: $2,698

Key Features: Full generator kit, ideal for emergency back-up power

Description: The Arc Solar Systems SPG-3000 solar power generator is a medium-sized, powerful yet portable system that can be used for emergency back-up power during power outages as well as on hunting or camping trips. The system features flexible-non-breakable, roll-up solar panels to charge an external battery bank and dramatically increase power storage capability. While larger than other portable solar power generators, the SPG-3000 is designed to be durable enough for regular transporting and compact enough to fit into the trunk of the smallest car or even on an ATV (when properly equipped with racks).

7 ARC SOLAR SYSTEMS
$2,698

Manufacturer's Comment: *"A solar power generator can provide valuable electricity when and where you need it most and is a self-contained, self-sustaining power generator. During resource shortages or during emergencies, oftentimes, fuel is not available. No fuel means no power for gas generators, so we also recommend having a secondary but 'renewable energy' type of power supply."*
—JARED BROADBENT, ARC SOLAR SYSTEMS SPOKESPERSON

"GOAL ZERO'S GUIDE 10 PLUS RECHARGER ENABLES USERS TO RECHARGE ELECTRONICS OR AA/AAA BATTERIES VIA SOLAR POWER OR A USB PORT."

8 GOAL ZERO

Model: Guide 10 Plus Solar Kit
www.goalzero.com
MSRP: $119.88

Key Features: Solar battery recharger, easy-to-use, fast charge times

Description: Goal Zero's Guide 10 Plus Recharger enables users to recharge electronics or AA/AAA batteries via solar power or a USB port. The highly portable rechargeable battery pack keeps handheld gear such as cell phones, music players or GPS devices charged, some in as little as an hour. The Nomad 13 solar panel delivers an ultra-compact yet powerful solar panel that enables charging handheld devices directly from its USB and 12-Volt DC charging ports. The design is foldable, rugged and weather resistant.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"Complete with a versatile AA/AAA battery pack and a 7-watt solar panel, the Guide 10 Plus Solar Recharging Kit is an essential piece to any survival kit. Keep phones, radios and other critical handheld devices charged up through the built-in USB port on the Guide 10 Plus battery pack and Nomad 13 Solar Panel, or use the AA/AAA batteries to keep flashlights and headlamps working."*
—LISA JANSSEN, GOAL ZERO SPOKESPERSON ASE

8 GOAL ZERO
$119.88

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HOMESTEADING

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

INDEPENDENT, do-it-yourself, self-sufficient—does that describe you or your goals? Nothing says self-sufficiency like homesteading … and nothing says homesteading like working your own land, raising your own donkeys and washing it all off at the end of the day with your own home-made soap.

While *living off the land* may sound positively bucolic at first, the harsh reality of Mother Nature can quickly prove otherwise. We'll examine how to honestly evaluate your ability to thrive. Do you have enough food and water to sustain life? Can you make tools? Are you secure? Is there a source of fuel? Can you generate power? We'll also feature successful homesteading techniques from Tracy Breen, an accomplished outdoorsman and writer who hunts, fishes and lectures all over North America.

Homesteading is an act and a philosophy based on appreciating the rewards of basic, sustained living—are you ready to live off the grid? ASG

THE DOPE ON SOAP

HOMESTEADERS TAKE NOTE: HOW TO KEEP YOUR CLOTHES CLEAN WITH JUST THREE INGREDIENTS

BY WES PARKER

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

SO YOU LIVE OFF THE LAND. YOU GROW YOUR OWN GARDEN, RAISE YOUR OWN PROTEIN SOURCES AND HOMESCHOOL YOUR KIDS. BUT HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT HOW YOU'RE GOING TO KEEP YOUR CLOTHES AND LINENS CLEAN YET WITHOUT BUYING DETERGENT?

Super easy fix: Make your own laundry detergent!

To find out how, we went to Amber Erickson Gabbey, MA, a Boulder-based holistic health expert.

"Making your own laundry detergent is not only easy, fast, less expensive and more eco-friendly," Gabbey says, "it's better than commercial detergent, which often leaves soapy residue on clothes that can irritate skin."

"POWDER IS LESS EXPENSIVE TO MAKE, EASIER TO STORE AND EASIER TO PRODUCE THAN LIQUID."

THE STEPS

Three ingredients and four steps is all you need to make the soap!

- Use a box grater to grate up the soap into oatmeal-size pieces. It will look soft, almost like whipped cream, but it will actually be dry and brittle.
- Add the soap chips to the washing soda (break up any big clumps) and pulse it in a food processor or blender until it's blended well.
- Now, add the Borax and blend again until it looks like a well-mixed powder that has the consistency of baby powder.

POWDER OR LIQUID?

Powder is less expensive to make, easier to store and easier to produce than liquid.

"Since the goal here is to simply get things clean, you don't have to add perfumes and rinsing agents in the powder, unless you're determined to have your clothes smell like a spring breeze," Gabbey reports.

WATER COUNTS

Different locations' water varies.

Hard water, which contains calcium and magnesium, does not clean as well as soft water.

If you're in a location that has hard water, Gabbey says that a good rule of thumb is to add a little more of the powder to the laundry or give it a boost with about a half-cup of vinegar in the rinse.

Note: Neither one of these tricks will irritate the skin.

HOW MUCH?

Use 1 tablespoon per load (or 2 to 3 tablespoons for large or heavily soiled loads or if the water source is hard). Keep in mind that this mixture will not make suds like commercial products. For front loaders or those machines with soap drawers, put the powder on top of your load of clothing to ensure it gets mixed properly.

THE INGREDIENTS

As noted above, you need only three things to make your own laundry soap: one 4.5-ounce bar of Ivory Soap, two cups of Arm & Hammer Super Washing Soda and two cups of Borax. Yep, that's it!

THE PRODUCT

You'll end up with a fluffy white powder that smells like Ivory Soap and cleans clothes quite well. Store it in glass jars to keep away bugs, or you can use a tin can or plastic container.

THE BOTTOM LINE

To make powdered detergent, it takes only three ingredients you can find at any supermarket. This type of detergent not only works for hand-washing and washer/dryer combos commonly found in RVs but also in any machine. Each batch makes about 32 ounces of powder, which translates into between 32 to 64 loads of wash. It takes only a few minutes to complete this "recipe," so even if you're not officially homesteading, you might want to consider making your own laundry soap to save money and help the environment. ASC

STAINS

For those working outside in gardens, hiking or living in a wooded area, clothing will need extra attention from time to time. For stubborn stains, all you need is a bar of Fels-Naptha soap and some nylon netting.

First, cut Fels-Naptha soap in half to make a hand-held scrubber, then cover it in nylon netting and sew the edge with heavy-duty thread. Fold the netting over so you have several layers to use as a scrubbing surface. Dip the scrubber into some water and rub the stained area thoroughly. Then just toss the item in with the rest of the wash and let the soap do its magic.

"HARD WATER, WHICH CONTAINS CALCIUM AND MAGNESIUM, DOES NOT CLEAN AS WELL AS SOFT WATER."

HARD WATER: THE TEST

> Fill a bottle halfway with water you want to test.
> Screw on cap and shake it up.
> Remove cap and dump out water.
> Fill halfway again and add 5 or 6 drops of liquid dish soap.
> Replace cap and give it a couple of good shakes.

If bottle is full of soap suds and suds flow out when cap is removed, you do not have hard water. The more you have to shake the bottle to get it to fill with suds, and the less time those suds last, the "harder" your water. If all you get is a soapy film, then you have very hard water.

THE FIVE BEST SOAPS

→ Every soap has its strengths and weaknesses, but here are five really good ones to have on hand in a homesteader environment.

1 **Dawn Dish-Washing Detergent:** works well in cold water and also as shampoo. Non-toxic and biodegradable and can be used to make insecticide by diluting with water. Works as a flea bath for animals as well. Works as a glass cleaner if you add a bit of vinegar and water to it and stores well.

2 **Ivory Soap:** biodegradable and can get your clothes clean without residue. Can be used for dishwashing and shampoo and stores indefinitely.

3 **Soap Flakes:** originally invented as laundry soap because it was easy to dissolve them in warm water, they're made from a 100-percent vegetable base of palm and coconut oils. They contain no bleaches, phosphates, enzymes or perfumes and are completely biodegradable. You can use them as laundry soap, dish soap, body soap and as a general household cleaner. Easy to store and very lightweight.

4 **Fels-Naptha:** A heavy-duty laundry soap that's great for stain pre-treatment. Can also be used to treat poison ivy, poison oak or sumac rash when used just after exposure; it breaks up the plants' oils, which contain the toxins. You can use it as a bathroom cleaner and an insecticide. Fels-Naptha is not to be used as body soap, however, as it contains strong perfumes and additives for color. Stores indefinitely.

5 **Dr. Bronner's Magic Soap:** a mild, liquid Castile soap noted for its mildness. It's completely biodegradable and can be used for teeth brushing, everyday washing, shampooing, shaving cream, household cleaning and even leather soap. Will store for long periods of time but will separate if exposed to temperature shifts.

2

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LIVING OFF THE LAND

LEARN TO RELY ON YOUR BEST RESOURCE: YOURSELF

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY TRACY BREEN

AN IMPORTANT PART OF PREPPING IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY SELF-RELIANT. LIVING OFF THE LAND IS SIMPLY THE ULTIMATE WAY TO ENSURE THAT YOU'RE WORKING TOWARD GETTING BACK TO BASICS AND TAKING CONTROL OF PROVIDING THE ESSENTIALS FOR LIVING.

When people hear the phrase "living off the land," it's likely that the first thing they envision is a couple of hillbillies living down by the river, eating frogs and spending their days working on the farm.

The truth is, these days, more and more people are living off the land in some capacity, and the movement seems to be growing.

FARM LIFE

My wife and I recently purchased a hobby farm with the intent of living off the land as much as possible. Do we still go to the grocery store? Yes, we do. But each week, we are replacing more and more of our store-purchased foods with home-grown food. My goal is to eventually produce about 85 percent of what we eat with our small farm. Why are we doing this? The short answer: It's healthier. And it makes us self-sufficient, which could really come in handy should disaster strike.

I never dreamed I would grow my own food and live on a farm, but the idea started to grow on me when my wife started having health problems that were related to the foods we were eating.

When we got married, she was only allergic to one thing: shellfish. Over the past 10 years, the list has grown to include all kinds of fruits, vegetables, dairy, gluten and a variety of other store-bought products. Why did she become allergic to several things over time? According to her doctors, many of the allergies are related to the way store-bought foods are being grown. Pesticides, GMOs and other factors have made my wife a walking allergy. So, I set out to change it.

If you like the idea of growing what you eat, realize that you don't need a large farm to produce a large percentage of what you eat.

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

A nice garden is a must when trying to live off the land.

PRODUCE

We have a garden. Regardless of where you live, you can grow a garden. People who live in apartments can grow a garden. Even a small garden can produce an enormous amount of pesticide-free vegetables. My favorites are green beans, squash and tomatoes, which all can grow in abundance with very little effort or space. A couple of rows of beans in a small garden will provide enough to eat fresh beans daily and leave enough over to freeze. Tomatoes can be made in to salsa and spaghetti sauce or can be canned. Last year, we planted a small row of squash and got a couple of garbage cans full of vegetables. Squash is easy to store over winter, which is one reason I grew it; it will last for months without any preparation if you keep it in a cool, dry place.

We also keep bees for the honey.

WHAT ABOUT MEAT?

Most Americans eat a fair amount of meat. If you don't have at least an acre or two, raising farm animals can be tough, but even in a small area, there are a few animals that you can raise. The first animal I would suggest is rabbit. After you get past the cute little face, you'll realize that they're one of the best animals to raise for meat. They offer white meat, they don't make noise and two does and a buck can produce several hundred pounds of meat a year.

If you have enough room for a goat or sheep, they can provide excellent sources of meat, milk and cheese. Chickens are a valuable source of meat and eggs, so if you have room for a couple, they're a great investment.

MEAT OPTIONS

- Rabbits
- Goats
- Chickens
- Sheep

"REGARDLESS OF WHERE YOU LIVE, YOU CAN GROW A GARDEN."

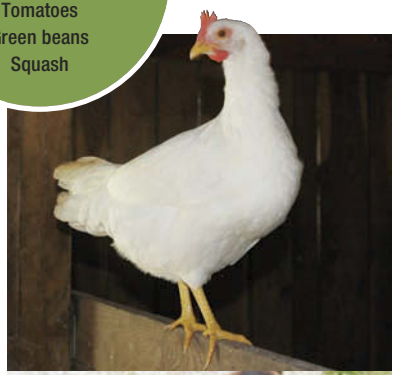
GROWING VEGETABLES GUIDE

VEGETABLE	START SEEDS INDOORS (weeks before last spring frost)	START SEEDS OUTDOORS (weeks before or after last spring frost)	COLD HARDINESS	WHEN TO FERTILIZE	WHEN TO WATER
Beans	—	Anytime after	Tender	After heavy bloom and set of pods	Regularly, from start of pod to set
Beets	—	3 before to 3 after	Half-hardy	At time of planting	Only during drought conditions
Broccoli	6–8	2–3 before	Hardy	3 weeks after transplanting	Only during drought conditions
Brussels Sprouts	6–8	—	Hardy	3 weeks after transplanting	At transplanting
Cabbage	6–8	1 before to 1 after	Hardy	3 weeks after transplanting	2-3 weeks before harvest
Carrots	—	3–5 before	Half-hardy	Preferably in the fall for the following spring	Only during drought conditions
Cauliflower	6–8	1 before to 1 after	Half-hardy	3 weeks after transplanting	Once, 3 weeks before harvest
Celery	6–8	—	Tender	At time of transplanting	Once a week
Corn	—	2 after	Tender	When 8 to 10 inches tall, and again when first silk appears	When tassels appear and cobs start to swell
Cucumbers	2–4	1–2 after	Very tender	1 week after bloom, and again 3 weeks later	Frequently, especially when fruits form
Lettuce	4–6	1 before to 2 after	Half-hardy	2-3 weeks after transplanting	Once a week
Melons	2–4	2 after	Very tender	1 week after bloom, and again 3 weeks later	Once a week
Onion sets	—	4 before	Hardy	When bulbs begin to swell, and again when plants are one foot tall	Only during drought conditions
Parsnips	—	0–3 before	Hardy	1 year before planting	Only during drought conditions
Peas	—	4–6 before	Hardy	After heavy bloom and set of pods	Regularly, from start of pod to set
Peppers	8–10	—	Very tender	After first fruit-set	Once a week
Potato tubers	—	0–2 after	Half-hardy	At bloom time or time of second hilling	Regularly, when tubers start to form
Pumpkins	2–4	1 after	Tender	Just before vines start to run, when plants are about 1-foot tall	Only during drought conditions

Source: Old Farmer's Almanac

SPACE-SAVING VEGGIES

Tomatoes
Green beans
Squash



TOP TO BOTTOM: Chickens are one of the most useful animals on the planet. They are cheap to raise and offer you both eggs and meat. • Goats, like this one, provide both meat and milk. • Rabbits can easily be kept in the city. Two does and a buck can provide you with hundreds of pounds of meat a year. • We also keep sheep. They are easy to raise on grass and raising them organically is extremely easy.

TRY IT

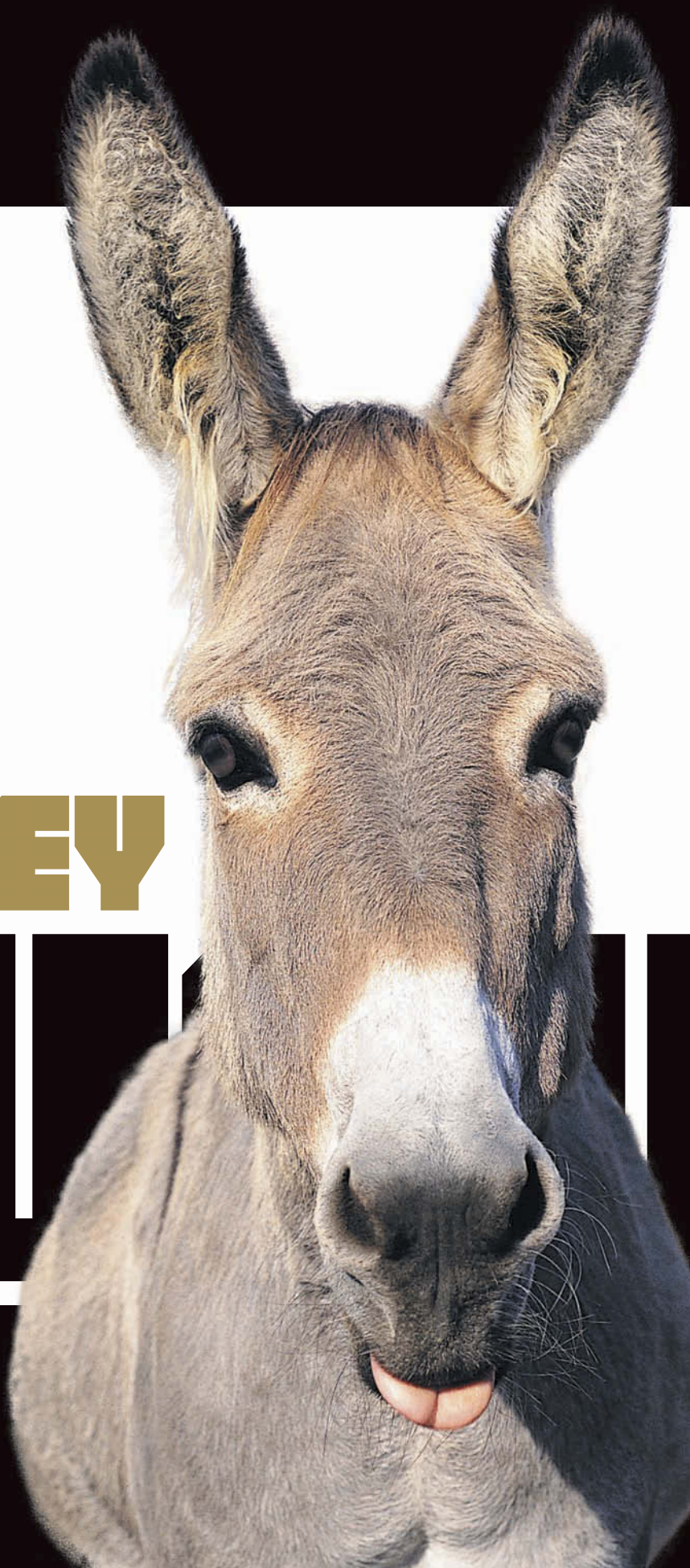
Between our garden, three sheep, one or two goats, a few rabbits, chickens and bees, we manage to supply ourselves with 70 percent of what we eat. Anyone with a little land can do this. Choose vegetables and livestock that don't require a lot of time and effort, and you, too, will be living off the land, feeling self-sufficient and eating healthier, to boot. Cue the banjos! ASC

Tracy Breen is a Wild Game Dinner Speaker and outdoor writer. In the past several years, he has been blessed to hunt, fish and speak all over North America.

FIVE REASONS THE HUMBLE BURRO MAKES A VALUABLE HOMESTEAD INVESTMENT

DONKEY

BU



BY ALEX LAGRAND

ASIDE FROM BEING A MAJOR POLITICAL ICON AND AN OGRE'S BEST FRIEND, DONKEYS HAVE PROVEN THEMSELVES TO BE EXTREMELY USEFUL IN ESTABLISHING A HOMESTEAD.

With hooves more elastic than a horse's in addition to a lower cost of maintenance, donkeys have been known to boast versatility and efficiency as compared to their often more well known counterparts.

We went straight to the source to find out more about this animal and talked to Leah Patton of the American Donkey and Mule Society of Lewisville, Texas. The following five donkey strengths can help you weigh the decision on whether you want to take the plunge and adopt a donkey.

1. COST-EFFICIENT CARTING

While mules are known worldwide for their carting skills, donkeys are also able to carry heavy loads. You can saddle and harness them, and they are able to carry heavy loads for long periods of time. In several South American countries, the use of donkeys as a carrying animal occurs more frequently than not.

Donkeys would greatly contribute to an off-the-grid lifestyle by providing a natural and cost-efficient means of transporting goods and can be less expensive than horses. "Donkeys and mules don't need as much high-protein food as a horse and can get by on less feed," says Patton.

On a homestead, some of the things donkeys might carry are wood, farming equipment, food, hay and other items.

"THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF DONKEYS ALL OVER THE USA NEEDING HOMES."

– LEAH PATTON, THE AMERICAN DONKEY AND MULE SOCIETY

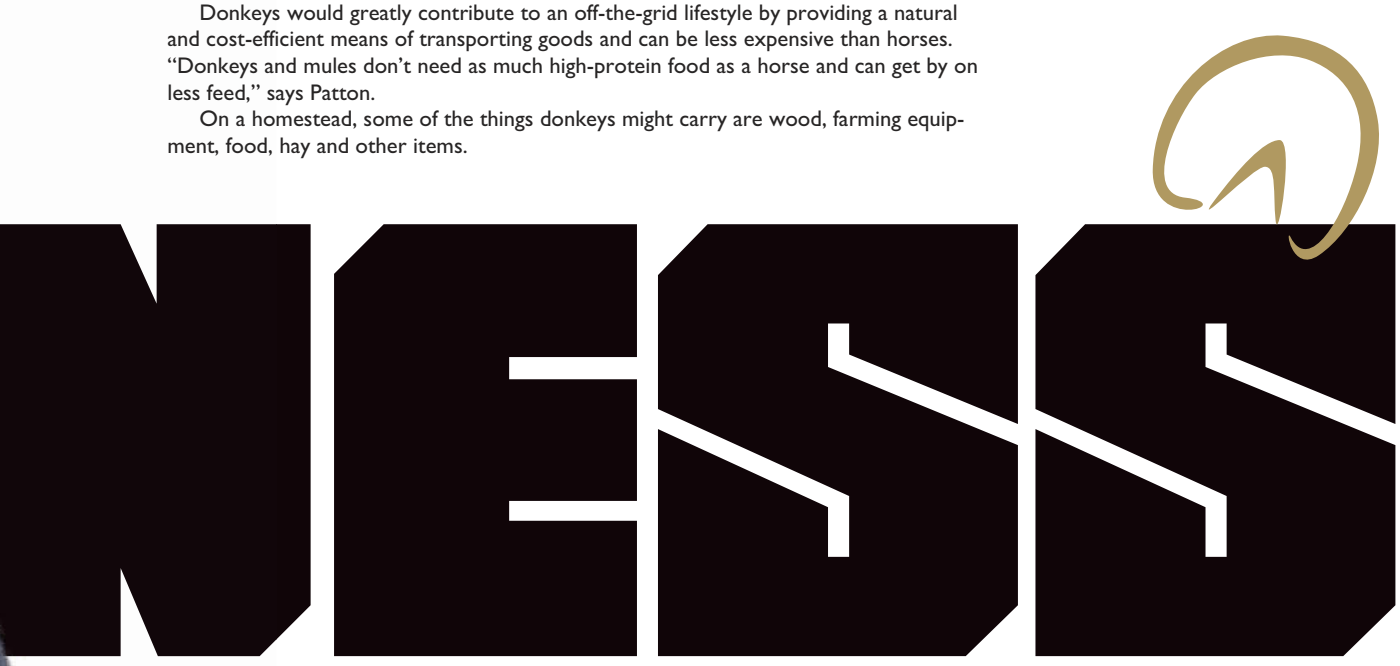


PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

Donkeys are excellent protectors of your sheep and goat herds.

"DONKEYS AND MULES DON'T NEED AS MUCH HIGH-PROTEIN FOOD AS A HORSE AND CAN GET BY ON LESS FEED."

— LEAH PATTON, THE AMERICAN DONKEY AND MULE SOCIETY

DONKEY TALK

JACK—a male donkey
JENNET—a female donkey
MULE—a cross between a male donkey and a female horse
HINNY—a cross between a male horse and a female donkey
JOHN—a male mule
MOLLIE—a female mule

COSTS

Although donkeys can be less expensive than horses because they need less high-protein food, there are costs you should keep in mind if you're considering getting a donkey.

"Hoof care, worming, hay, tack/equipment and other medical-type costs will still be the same and should be figured into the budget," Patton advises.

2. PRICELESS PROTECTION

When you think of a protective pet, your mind might immediately go to Lassie—but you can change that vision to include donkeys in addition to your faithful canine. Donkeys are able to perform lookout duty for herds of cattle as well as flocks of sheep, Patton says. Usually, jennets, or female donkeys, are perfect for this job, as they aren't too aggressive toward sheep.

Homesteads and ranches are perfect for making the most of the donkey's ability due to vast, open spaces and plenty of animals who need protection. Giving a donkey the opportunity to protect your family allows the animal to use a natural talent that has gone unknown to many in the past.

3. PAINLESS PLOWING

"With their ability to cart heavy loads fairly easily, plowing is a skill that fits right into a donkey's resumé, as well. Similar to being harnessed for carting, donkeys are able to be attached to a plow to help with small-acreage land," Patton says.

On a homestead, the growth of crops often requires you to cultivate your soil. The use of the plow dates back to ancient times, with different techniques and tools emerging through the years—the donkey being one of them. Once harnessed, a donkey is able to pull a plow to grind up the soil in preparation for the crops to be planted. Plowing is typically laborious work, and because

Donkeys are ideal for plowing small-acreage lots.

Just like horses, donkeys can be great for light riding as long as they have some training and a good saddle.

donkeys are able to work hard and for long periods of time, it takes the pain of plowing away from the owner.

4. RECREATIONAL RIDING

Along with working capabilities, donkeys can be saddled and ridden for light riding purposes.

Mules, the cross between a male donkey and a female horse, are more frequently used in the riding field than donkeys due to their "having the best characteristics of both parents," Patton says. "[They] are a little stronger, hardier and taller."

Both donkeys and mules have a disposition that allows for forming a great companionship between the animal and the rider, so if you're in for something with several working capabilities in addition to friendship, the donkey family should be what you set your eyes on.

5. EASY DONE, EASY BREED

One of the best-known qualities of donkeys, as well as other animals, is their ability to breed. There are several combinations within the equine family and several more under the donkey name. Mules typically are bred to maximize the best traits, yet mules themselves are unable to reproduce.

"Mules are sterile and cannot reproduce, so if a population increase is needed, one must think of a mule in the same terms as a horse gelding," Patton says. "Excellent for their job but not future generations."

IN CONCLUSION

Often overlooked, donkeys make good sense for a number of reasons. We hope we've shed some light on their practicality and that you find the one to suit your needs! ASC

Alex LaGrand is a North Carolina-based freelance writer who enjoys writing about various topics, particularly the outdoors and the military.

IS A DONKEY FOR YOU?

"There are hundreds of donkeys all over the USA needing homes," Patton says. "With the equine market as it is currently, many of the rescues are full and there are ads for donkeys to be found everywhere."

You can find a rescue near you by searching online or contacting a donkey organization. In addition, the following five rescues in the U.S. can direct you toward a donkey that needs a home:

> **Peaceful Valley Donkey Rescue**—San Angelo, Texas
> **Save Your Ass Rescue**—South Acworth, N.H.
> **Turning Pointe Donkey Rescue**—Dansville, Mich.
> **Forever Home Donkey Rescue**—Benson, Ariz.
> **Equine Aid Horse & Donkey Rescue**—Monroe, Wash.

CONTACT

For more information on what donkeys are capable of, visit the American Donkey and Mule Society's website at www.lovelongears.com.

KNIVES

POINT WELL TAKEN

A GOOD KNIFE CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE IN A VARIETY OF SURVIVAL SITUATIONS

A KNIFE IS A VITAL TOOL for any survival situation. Sure, a multi-tool is nice to have, but a simple knife or pocketknife is hard to replace in the wilderness or even urban emergencies. A sharp, well-balanced knife can be used to cut, carve, chop, butcher game and sharpen sticks for tools as well as be used for self-defense. Many of today's survival knives even come equipped with extra features such as a seatbelt cutter, window breaker, compass or even a flint for starting fires, making them truly indispensable for a number of emergency situations.

While choosing a knife is a highly personal decision, there are certain factors to evaluate, including blade length, shape, handle and materials. Ease of use as well as ease of sharpening are also key considerations for the next knife you add as an everyday carry or part of a survival kit.

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

1 HOGUE

Product: EX-F01 Extreme Fixed Blade
www.hogueknives.com
MSRP: $239.95

Description: The EX-F01 is a field tool packed with features such as a thick tool steel blade and integrated skull crusher. The broad point in front of the false edge gives strength to the tip and a large land for batoning. The EX-F01 is heavy enough to make chopping easy and improve penetration. All Hogue knives are hand-assembled and hand-sharpened in the USA.

Specifications:
Overall Knife Length: 10.5 inches and 12 inches
Blade Length: 5.5 inches and 7 inches
Blade Steel: A2 tool steel
Blade Finish: KG 2400 Series GUN-KOTE
Handle: G10, G-Mascus, wood and pearlized polymer green (ZX-F01)
Weight: 10.4 ounces (5.5 inches) and 12.4 ounces (7 inches)

Manufacturer's Comment: *"Hogue products are available from your local firearms/knife dealer. You can also purchase the EX-F01 directly from Hogue."* —CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

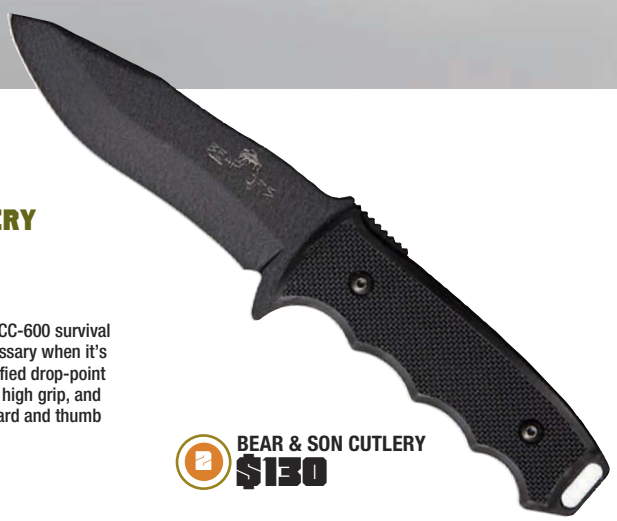
2 BEAR & SON CUTLERY

Model: Constant II Model CC-600
www.bearandsoncutlery.com
MSRP: $130

Description: The Bear OPS Constant II CC-600 survival knife is designed to do everything necessary when it's you against the elements. It has a modified drop-point blade, the textured G-10 scales allow a high grip, and the handle features a finger groove, guard and thumb notches.

Specifications:
Overall Knife Length: 9.375 inches
Blade Length: 4.625 inches
Blade Steel: 1095 carbon-steel blade
Blade Finish: Black epoxy-powder coated
Handle: Black textured G10
Weight: 9.0 ounces

Manufacturer's Comment: *"While some companies only assemble parts brought from various suppliers and put their names on the product, we do everything in house."* —CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE



2 BEAR & SON CUTLERY
$130

"... WE DO EVERYTHING IN HOUSE."

3 BROWNING

Model: The Hell Fire Folder
www.browning.com
MSRP: $276

Description: The Hell Fire tactical folder features a partially serrated tanto-point blade. The opening slot is ambidextrous with an opening assist finger tab and parallel spine serrations for a more secure thumb grip. The handle features full-finger choils, textured matte-black G10 laminate, recessed fasteners and a rounded rear pommel. The steel pocket-clip is adjustable four ways, so you can carry the Hell Fire hinge up or down.

Specifications:
Overall Knife Length: 8.25 inches
Closed: 4.75 inches
Blade Length: 3.5625 inches
Blade Steel: 154CM stainless steel
Blade Finish: Black
Handle: G-10 laminate, checkered texture
Lock: Walker-style lock
Weight: 6.2 ounces

Manufacturer's Comment: *"Browning's Black Label Tactical Blades combine custom-grade workmanship, exquisite materials and cutting-edge design to produce the most efficient and exotic tactical blades available anywhere, at any price."* —CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

4 KERSHAW

Model: Shuffle
www.kershaw.kaiusaltd.com
MSRP: $24.95

Description: The Kershaw Shuffle folding knife is a multi-purpose mini-blade. The blade is made of versatile 8Cr13MoV steel. The K-Texture handle is exclusive to Kershaw. A liner lock secures the blade open and closed. Kershaw's new K-Texture on the handle provides an extra secure grip. There's a flathead screwdriver at the butt of the knife that doubles as a lanyard attachment, plus a bottle opener on the back.

Specifications:
Overall Knife Length: 5.625 inches
Blade Length: 2.375 inches
Length Closed: 3.25 inches
Blade Steel: 8Cr13MoV
Blade Finish: Bead-blasted finish
Handle: Glass-filled nylon, K-Texture grip
Lock: Liner lock
Weight: 3.2 ounces

Manufacturer's Comment: *"The Shuffle brings fun and function to any indoor or outdoor gathering—it's also an extremely handy addition to any gear bag."* —THOMAS WELK, DIRECTOR OF SALES & MARKETING, SPORTING DIVISION, KAI USA, LTD.

5 BLACKHAWK!

Model: KALISTA II
www.blackhawk.com
MSRP: $99

Description: The Kalista II is a concealment knife designed to support all knife tactic styles and grips. Crafted by Michael Janich, its offset, scalloped choils and textured G10 handle slabs provide a tactile experience as well as exceptional control, allowing the user to effortlessly assimilate the blade.

Specifications:
Overall Knife Length: 7.3 inches
Blade Length: 3.3 inches
Blade Steel: AUS8A stainless steel
Blade Finish: Black PVD coating
Handle: Textured G10
Weight: 12.8 ounces

Manufacturer's Comment: *"We're constantly researching, refining and perfecting every detail to provide gear that won't let you down. Because we're not just making stuff. We're honoring a vow."* —BLACKHAWK! REPRESENTATIVE

6 COLUMBIA RIVER KNIVES

Model: M16-10KSF - Special Forces - Designed by Kit Carson
www.crkt.com
MSRP: $49.99

Description: Fans of Kit Carson's tactical folding knives will appreciate this more affordable cousin. Handles are in the M16 style but with a retro-flavored stainless steel. The handle finish is classic black oxide. These folders are available in several blade style options. Blades also incorporate the Carson Flipper, which doubles as a blade guard when open. Blade lock-up is secured by the frame lock mechanism.

Specifications:
Overall Knife Length: 7 inches
Blade Length: 3 inches
Length Closed: 4 inches
Blade Steel: 8Cr13MoV
Blade Finish: Black EDP
Handle: 2CR13
Lock: Frame lock
Weight: 2.7 ounces

Manufacturer's Comment: *"This is a proven knife design platform made simple, made tough: a straight up, 'no frills,' carry folder design that kicks butt in pure performance and value."* —MARKETING MANAGER

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• TurtleSkin Hypodermic Needle/Cut Resistant/Slash Resistant Gloves
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• eGear, GSI Outdoors, and so much more to help you SURVIVE!

-Mike Haller, President, Survival Bags, Inc.
Former U.S. Marine, Police Officer, Volunteer Firefighter & Paramedic

7 POHL FORCE USA

Model: EOD: Mike One Survival
www.pohlforceusa.com
MSRP: $390

Description: New to Pohl Force's Euro Ops Division (EOD) is the Mike. The blade is high-quality Niolox stainless steel with a PVD coating. The titanium and G10 handle plates make it light, but it still handles well for tactical and survival use. The Mike is an everyday-carry folder that is also suitable for military and extreme survival.

Specifications:
Overall Knife Length: 8.66 inches
Blade Length: 3.74 inches
Blade Steel: Niolox
Blade Finish: PVD coating
Handle: G10
Lock: Liner lock and rotoblock
Weight: 5.64 ounces

Manufacturer's Comment: *"Pohl Force knives combine exceptional design and practical features. Customer product satisfaction and service support is always at the core of our efforts."* —DIETMAR POHL, OWNER/DESIGNER

"CUSTOMER PRODUCT SATISFACTION AND SERVICE SUPPORT IS ALWAYS AT THE CORE OF OUR EFFORTS."

"WE'VE BEEN MAKING KNIVES SINCE 1898 ..."

8 KA-BAR

Model: Mark I
www.kabar.com
MSRP: $102.64

Description: The KA-BAR Mark I recalls the world-famous Mark I USN knife, except this updated version features epoxy-powder-coated blades for corrosion resistance and a non-glare surface.

Specifications:
Overall Knife Length: 9.1875 inches
Blade Length: 5.125 inches
Blade Steel: 1095 Cro-Van
Blade Finish: Epoxy-powder coated
Handle: Leather
Weight: 0.45 pounds

Manufacturer's Comment: *"We've been making knives since 1898, and each knife undergoes our unique manufacturing processes and testing to ensure corrosion resistance, strength, edge-holding ability and an out-of-the-box, razor-sharp cutting edge."* —PRODUCT MARKETING MANAGER

9 OUTDOOR EDGE CORP.

Model: Razor-Lite (RL-10)
www.outdooredge.com
MSRP: $49.95

Description: Outdoor Edge's innovative new replacement razor blade system is the solution for dull knives. Either sharpen the blade or just press the lock button to remove and replace a with new one.

Specifications:
Overall Knife Length: 8 inches
Blade Length: 3.5 inches
Blade Steel: Japanese 420J
Handle: Rubberized Kraton
Weight: 3.6 ounces

Manufacturer's Comment: *"The Razor-Lite is the sort of knife you're glad to have when you need it. Being able to simply replace the blade is awesome."* —MARKETING MANAGER ASC

THINK BEFORE YOU DRINK

PORTABLE WATER-PURIFICATION SYSTEMS PROVIDE LIFE-SUSTAINING HYDRATION

EVERYONE KNOWS YOU CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT WATER, RIGHT?

Reliable, portable water purification systems and tools are crucial additions to any survival gear collection. More important than food, fresh, drinkable water is one of the scarcest resources in an emergency or in the wilderness. Carrying water in a backpack or go bag for an extended period of time is not only physically taxing, it takes up a great deal of space that could be dedicated to other critical survival needs.

Knowing when water is safe to drink is tricky. Stored water can present dangers after extended periods of time. In the wilderness, even clear streams and lakes pose a health threat with lurking bacteria and other contaminants, making purification a vital exercise prior to drinking. Boiling remains one of the most effective means to distill and purify water, but at times when boiling isn't feasible, having a water purification system on hand can be a lifesaver. Here are a few of the options on the market.

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

1 BERKEY WATER PURIFICATION SYSTEMS

Model: Go Berkey Kit
www.berkeywater.com
MSRP: $155

Key Features: Passive purification, removes bacteria and other contaminants

Description: The Go Berkey Kit purifies both treated water and untreated raw water from such sources as remote lakes, streams, stagnant ponds and water supplies. The system is ideal for outdoor activities and in hostile environments where electricity, water pressure or treated water may not be available. Go Berkey removes viruses, pathogenic bacteria, cysts and parasites entirely and extracts harmful chemicals, such as herbicides, pesticides, VOCs, organic solvents, radon 222 and trihalomethanes. It also reduces unhealthy heavy metals such as lead and mercury. This system is so powerful it can remove red food coloring from water, which is a simple way users can periodically test the performance.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"The Go Berkey Kit is a must during unexpected emergencies."*
—DEBBIE MORROW, SALES MANAGER

2 WATERPURE TECHNOLOGIES

Model: H2O ResQ
www.waterpuretechnologies.com
MSRP: $34.95

Key Features: Extends water storage life up to five years, treats 300+ gallons of water

Description: The H2O ResQ Emergency Water Storage Kit can be used in bottles, quarts, gallons, drums and large water-storage containers to extend the life of stored water up to five years. The kit includes two solutions that should be used in tandem to prolong the shelf life of stored water-copper-silver ion concentrate and filtered sodium hypochlorite. The copper-silver ion concentrate does not evaporate out of storage water, nor is it affected by ultraviolet rays from the sun, eliminating the need to rotate water out every six months. There is also a test kit to assess the level of copper ions in stored water, as well as a storage guide and measurement vial.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"In a technical context for the H2O ResQ Kit, it is a variety of different elements working together synergistically to produce results not obtainable by any of the elements individually."* —TOM SMOKOFF, SALESPERSON, WATERPURE TECHNOLOGIES

3 KATADYN

Model: Hiker PRO Microfilter
www.katadyn.com
MSRP: $84.95

Key Features: Lightweight, large filter area, quick connect fittings for easy hose installation

Description: The Katadyn Hiker PRO is a small unit with a powerful filter. The large filter area delivers an outstanding pumping performance, reliably eliminating bacteria, cysts and sediments from water. The filter is very easy to clean on trips thanks to its cleanable filter protector, which also appreciably extends the life of the 0.3-micron glass-fiber filter cartridge. Its active carbon filling improves the taste of water and eliminates odors. Installation and removal of the input and output hoses is child's play, thanks to convenient quick connect fittings.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"With water weighing eight pounds per gallon, those who have to go light need an easy, dependable way to filter water from natural sources, and the Hiker PRO fits the bill."* —VIOLA FREY, KATADYN CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

"WITH WATER WEIGHING EIGHT POUNDS PER GALLON, THOSE WHO HAVE TO GO LIGHT NEED AN EASY, DEPENDABLE WAY TO FILTER WATER …"

4 CAMELBAK

Model: All Clear Water Purifier Bottle
www.camelbak.com
MSRP: $99

Key Features: Long-lasting UV bulb, simple to use, treats water in 60 seconds

Description: The CamelBak All Clear water purifier bottle uses UV light to effectively neutralize viruses, bacteria and protozoa so you can enjoy safe drinking water anywhere. All you have to do is fill the bottle with water, screw on the All Clear cap, press the power button and agitate the bottle until the treatment is complete; you can treat 25 fluid ounces (.75 liter) of water in only 60 seconds. An LCD screen on the cap verifies the success of the treatment and once the cycle is complete, you can remove the All Clear UV purifier cap, stow it in the protective case and screw on the included CamelBak classic cap. The bottle operates on a built-in rechargeable lithium-ion battery that provides 80 treatments (equivalent to 16 gallons of water).

Manufacturer's Comment: *"This system is so easy to use, and it includes a USB cable to recharge the battery with a portable power source or solar panel."* —CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

"THIS SYSTEM IS SO EASY TO USE …"

CASCADE DESIGNS
$109.95

CASCADE DESIGNS

Model: Platypus GravityWorks Water Filter
www.cascadedesigns.com
MSRP: $109.95

Key Features: Gravity filter, improved durability, hollow-fiber filter technology

Description: The Platypus GravityWorks water filter combines the speed and utility of the original Platypus CleanStream gravity filter with less weight and improved durability. GravityWorks includes two four-liter reservoirs, one for dirty water and one for clean water, each with hang loops for easy in-camp use. To use, simply fill the dirty reservoir with water and hang it above the clean water reservoir to let gravity carry water through the filter. Hollow fiber filter technology offers a high flow rate and physically removes particles, protozoa and bacteria, including giardia, salmonella and NS cryptosporidium, down to 0.2-microns in size. The reservoir features SlimeGuard antimicrobial treatment for taste-free performance.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"The Platypus GravityWorks water filter delivers four liters of potable water in just 2.5 minutes without requiring a single pump stroke."*
—KERRI DELLISANTI, MEDIA RELATIONS

"... FOUR LITERS OF POTABLE WATER IN JUST 2.5 MINUTES WITHOUT REQUIRING A SINGLE PUMP STROKE."

CASCADE DESIGNS
$89.95

"THE MINIWORKS EX MICROFILTER DELIVERS LONG-LASTING, FIELD-MAINTAINABLE WATER FILTRATION IN DEMANDING ENVIRONMENTS."

CASCADE DESIGNS

Model: MSR MiniWorks EX Water Filter
www.cascadedesigns.com
MSRP: $89.95

Key Features: Ceramic/carbon filter, no tools required for cleaning, fast flow, reliable

Description: The compact MSR MiniWorks EX water filter features a ceramic/carbon Marathon EX element to effectively remove bacteria and protozoa, including giardia and cryptosporidium, even with frequent use. The system also removes unpleasant tastes and odors caused by organic compounds, such as iodine, chlorine and pesticides. The filter can be cleaned over and over for maximum field life without requiring tools. MiniWorks EX contains an AirSpring Accumulator to increase filtration speed up to one liter per minute. And the easy disassembly enables users to troubleshoot and maintain the filter in the field.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"The MiniWorks EX microfilter delivers long-lasting, field-maintainable water filtration in demanding environments."*
—KERRI DELLISANTI, MEDIA RELATIONS

"NO PUMPS OR TANGLY HOSES TO MESS WITH—WE JUST WANTED THE CLEANEST, EASIEST, MOST COMPACT SYSTEM IN THE WORLD."

7 GENERAL ECOLOGY

Model: First Need XLE Elite
www.generalecology.com
MSRP: $118.00

Key Features: Removes contaminants down to 0.1 micron, EPA Standard-certified, fast flow rate

Description: The First Need XLE Elite water purifier provides chemical-free water purification via a structured matrix three-stage purification technology. It provides natural and ecological removal of contaminants, such as bacteria, giardia, cryptosporidium and others, down to 0.1 micron nominal (0.4 absolute). The system also removes dirt, unpleasant tastes and chemicals such as pesticides and herbicides. XLE Elite includes a pre-filter that removes larger contaminants before they reach the purifier as well as a gravity feed kit for hands-free purification without pumping. The system is certified to the EPA Guide Standard for microbiological purifiers against bacteria, cysts and viruses.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"Our water purifier delivers convenient chemical-free water purification for any emergency situation in which you can imagine yourself."* —CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

8 AQUAMIRA

Model: Frontier Pro Emergency Water Filter
www.aquamira.com
MSRP: $24.95

Key Features: Pump-free system, highly portable, extended filter life, universal connectivity

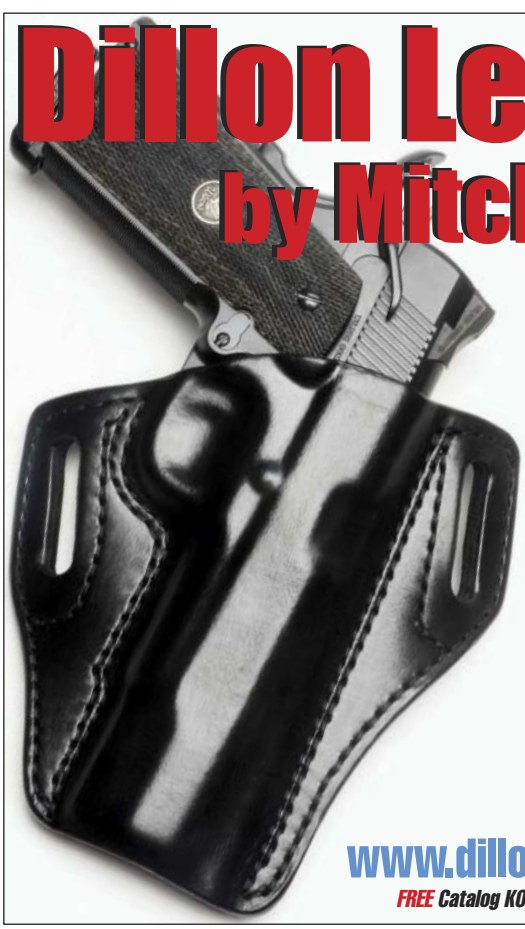
Description: Aquamira's Frontier Pro Emergency Water Filter provides an ultra-light, compact portable filtration system that is both pump-free and hands-free. The universal connectivity system enables users to connect to any water bottle. Users drink directly from the Frontier Pro unit, eliminating the possibility of confusing the inlet and outlet tubes and the possibility of cross contamination. The Frontier Pro can also be set up in a "gravity flow" mode to filter water unattended. The system includes Miraguard, which suppresses the growth of bacteria, algae, fungus, mold and mildew in the filter media. With the patented Bite Me valve, users experience drip-free easy drinking, and the integrated cap and Cap Strap keep the drinking end clean and contamination free.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"We told our designers that there was something missing when it came to portable filtration devices. We wanted a small, compact, easy-to-use filter that would compete with the 'big boys.' No pumps or tangly hoses to mess with—we just wanted the cleanest, easiest, most compact system in the world."* —CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

ASC

7 GENERAL ECOLOGY
$118.00

8 AQUAMIRA
$24.95



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by Mitch Rosen!

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THE WILDERNESS IS WHERE you really get to expand your prepper repertoire; it's like your stage, and surviving through Act III is your motivation. In your hands you hold your script, the American Survival Guide—study it well. We've included lots of supplemental information.

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While you've been out digging for grubs and trapping rodents, the weather has turned ugly. Can you pick a lock and break into a cabin for shelter? Yes, that's right: We'll show you how.

And after all that, get ready for your big fight scene, where you drop your food and defend the campsite. You'll have to perform your own stunts, but we'll show you what to do. And that's just the opening scene in your survivalist screenplay.

Ready? And … action! ASC

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

RESCUE

EXPERT ADVICE ON SURVIVING AN UNEXPECTED SITUATION IN THE WILD

BY ERIN HATFIELD

GETTING LOST OR INJURED IN THE WILDERNESS CAN MEAN, SIMPLY PUT, DEATH. IT'S ONE OF THE WORST NIGHTMARES FOR PREPPERS.

Rest a bit easier: Dedicated volunteers on search and rescue (SAR) teams across the country help thousands of people each year find their way back to civilization. Being a member of a SAR team takes months of training and diligence to be ready when the call comes in. To find out more about these brave and dedicated humans, we went straight to the source and talked to Bill Clendenning, a member of the Douglas County SAR (DCSAR) team in Colorado.

TRAINING

From rescuing a hiker lost in a national park to locating a missing motorist, SAR teams are often called in to assist in emergency situations. And no matter how treacherous the call, it is answered by a team of volunteers.

"Of the 45 members of the Douglas County search and rescue team, 95 percent are volunteers," Clendenning explains. "A handful of paid members are representatives from either the local parks and recreation department or law enforcement."

Being part of a SAR team requires a great deal of training, even for volunteers. New DCSAR members must complete six to nine months of training, and every person has to complete two classroom and two field sessions each month. Along with the instruction is an eight-hour medical class for first responders, maps and navigation and specialized rescue training, such as how to safely rescue someone from a rock or cliff.

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

ME

"ONE OF THE KEY THINGS TO REMEMBER ABOUT A SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM IS THAT WE DON'T REPLACE THE POLICE OR FIRE DEPARTMENTS."

—BILL CLENDENNING, DOUGLAS COUNTY SAR (DCSAR) TEAM MEMBER

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

Clendenning and his peers field an average of 110 SAR calls each year. DSCAR covers a wide area in Colorado that includes Pike National Forest, the Devil's Head landmark and a number of state and local trails. Because of the specific area, DCSAR trains in all weather conditions, including snow and night rescues. Adverse weather, particularly snow storms, accelerates safety issues and is grounds for calling the team in to assist earlier.

"One of the first assessments we make is determining the subject's survivability," Clendenning explains. "We don't want to risk the health or safety of our team members, particularly in highly adverse conditions."

Part of DCSAR's adverse weather preparation is winter avalanche training, where members learn how to complete rescues using snowshoes, snow mobiles, cross-country skis and other specialized equipment. This also includes identifying dangerous terrain that can impact rescue efforts or pose a threat to those in the area.

Clendenning admits that being a DSCAR member is a huge time commitment, "but we want to make sure someone is going to be there when the pager goes off and an emergency situation is underway."

FIELDING THE CALL

Those calls come from local law enforcement when there is need for extra resources.

"One of the key things to remember about a search and rescue team is that we don't replace the police or fire departments," Clendenning says. "We augment the local authorities at their request to assist with any search and rescue mission."

Missions can include a missing child, an abandoned vehicle or a known technical rescue. The SAR team members assemble at a pre-determined staging site, a central location where the tools and other equipment are kept to help ensure a timely response. Most SAR instances last less than 24 hours before the missing or injured person is found.

To help increase the odds of being found if you become lost in an unfamiliar area, Clendenning offers some advice.

"One of the most vital yet often overlooked strategies is to tell someone where you're going," he says. "Provide details such as what vehicle you're driving, what equipment you're taking and how long you plan to be gone."

5 KEY ITEMS

Carrying the proper supplies can help increase your chances of outlasting Mother Nature until the search and rescue team arrives. A well prepared pack includes:

Lighter – Fire is the most difficult survival element to create from scratch, especially if you're injured or weak.

Water container – A water bottle, preferably metal, will enable you to transfer and store water in camp.

Knife – A simple knife or pocketknife is hard to replace. It can be used to cut, carve, chop, butcher game and sharpen sticks for tools.

Signal whistle – Pack a loud whistle such a referee's whistle from a sporting goods store to signal for help. A whistle can be used day or night, hot or cold and in any location to alert rescuers of your whereabouts.

First-aid kit –Have a well equipped first-aid kit in your gear to better treat medical emergencies big and small.

BONUS:

Light source – A flashlight or headlamp with a very long battery life provides both task lighting and a signaling device during emergency situations.

PHOTOS BY THINKSTOCK

5 SURVIVAL TIPS

Bill Clendenning with the Douglas County SAR team in Colorado provides a few tips to help ensure a successful search and rescue mission.

- Sit still and get your bearings. Watch the direction of the sun to help determine direction.
- If you have a cell phone, try to text or call someone, but don't forget to preserve battery life.
- Build a small fire and make a shelter. The fire can be help signal authorities, and the shelter protects you from the elements.
- Assess group injuries and determine if someone needs to go for help.
- Secure a source of fresh water, which can include a nearby stream, lake or even gathered rain or snow.

"ONE OF THE MOST VITAL YET OFTEN OVERLOOKED STRATEGIES IS TO TELL SOMEONE WHERE YOU'RE GOING."

—BILL CLENDENNING, DOUGLAS COUNTY SAR (DCSAR) TEAM MEMBER

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

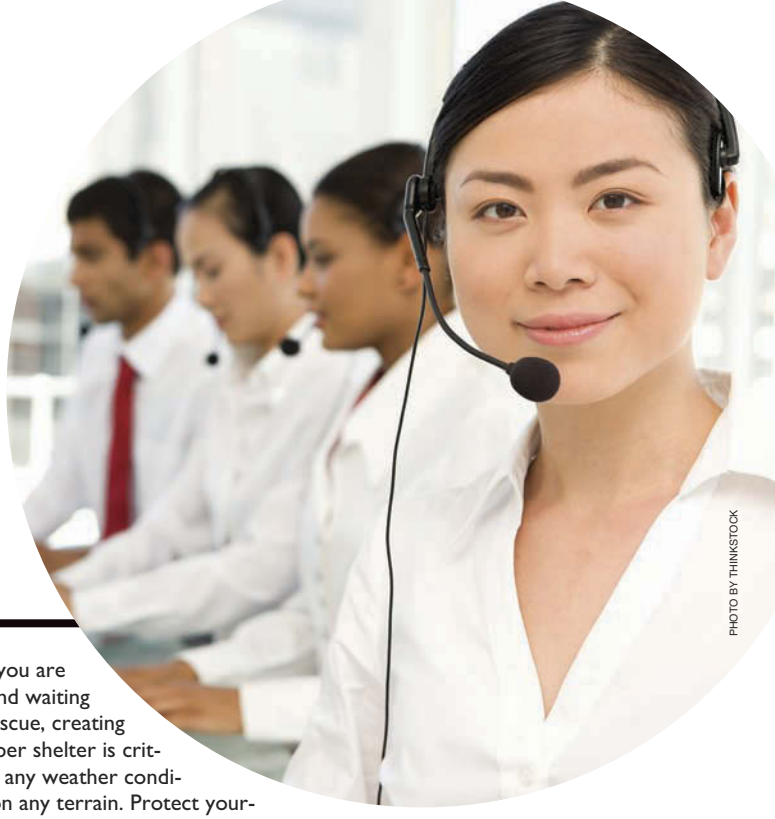

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

"TAKING A FEW MINUTES TO CATCH YOUR BREATH, HYDRATE AND ASSESS THE SITUATION CAN HELP PREVENT ACTIONS THAT CAN MAKE YOU PREDICAMENT WORSE."

—BILL CLENDENNING, DOUGLAS COUNTY SAR (DCSAR) TEAM MEMBER

This information can help friends and family members determine when to call in the authorities as well as a provide good starting point for a possible search. Clendenning also suggests checking in with the trail register whenever possible. Give friends and family members a time frame after which they should contact authorities for help if they haven't heard from you.

"Most often, people wait 12 to 24 hours to call for help. By that time, Mother Nature has a head start, and exposure to the elements can make the situation worse," Clendenning warns.

Proper planning can also make a huge difference in surviving the wilderness. Being familiar with the area is also critical. Be sure to take a compass and maps, particularly in more rural areas where cell and GPS signals might be weak. And don't forget to pack enough supplies to last the duration of your trip.

"Take enough food, water, sunscreen and clothing for your entire trip," Clendenning says. "Staying hydrated, warm and dry is critical, especially in high altitudes."

INCREASE YOUR ODDS

- Make *sure* you tell someone where you're going.
- Provide details including what car you're driving, what equipment you're taking and how long you'll be gone.
- Plan, plan, plan.
- Call immediately for help; don't wait!

KEEP YOUR WITS ABOUT YOU

Many search and rescue missions are triggered by an injury during an otherwise normal outing. Common injuries include broken limbs, twisted ankles, burns from campfires and other minor traumas. Other times, people become disoriented and lose their way on the trail. In either instance, Clendenning suggests sitting still and taking a break before venturing off to look for help. Sitting still can help you assess the terrain and become oriented with direction by following the movement of the sun.

"Taking a few minutes to catch your breath, hydrate and assess the situation can help prevent actions that can make your predicament worse," Clendenning advises. "You don't want to compound getting lost with an injury or vice versa."

If you are lost and waiting for rescue, creating a proper shelter is critical in any weather condition on any terrain. Protect yourself from the elements, whether its the sun, rain or snow, to help prevent health issues such as sunburn, hypothermia or frostbite. A shelter can be as simple as a blanket thrown over a low-hanging tree branch, creating a lean-to or even setting up the tent you have in your pack.

Clendenning also advises building a small fire, which can be used for warmth, food preparation and signaling authorities. If you have a cell phone, try to attempt a call or text message to alert someone of your situation. Preserve battery life whenever possible, particularly if you're using a smartphone as a compass or GPS.

Once you have shelter and a fire secured, assess each member of the party for injuries.

"In one of the only instances where separating is recommended, have a member of the group go for help while two or more people stay behind with the injured person," Clendenning says.

BE PREPARED

Among the key factors Clendenning suggests to help reduce the risk of needing assistance from a search and rescue team is proper preparation.

"Communicate well with your friends and family so they know where you're going and for how long," he says. "Make a plan and stick to it. Above all, know your limits."

With a little forward thinking and adequate preparation, you can have a safe excursion. Knowing how to react should you get into a dangerous situation can help ensure you're found and rescued in a timely fashion. ASC

FAST FACTS

- → Typically, a high percentage of search and rescue teams are volunteers.
- → Training takes six to nine months.
- → Teams first assess the victim's survivability.

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MANUAL LABOR

TEN HAND-OPERATED KITCHEN TOOLS TO KEEP NEARBY SHOULD THE GRID GO DOWN

BY WES PARKER

IF YOU ARE DEPENDENT ON ELECTRIC KITCHEN APPLIANCES, WHAT'S YOUR PLAN IF THE GRID GOES DOWN?

Manually operated kitchen tools are mandatory for the truly self-sufficient. No doubt about it: You have to cook and store food. Yet, many hand tools can stand in for your electric ones, and you can often find these at garage sales or get them cheap from the store. It pays to have a backup, so get a list going. Below are some common, manually operated kitchen items that you should have on hand, just in case:

TOP 10 ITEMS

1. If you can't use a food processer, a pastry cutter can stand in to combine butter and flour for rolls or pie crusts.

2. Apple peelers not only peel, but they core and slice. A clamping version is sturdier and easier to use than a suction-cup type.

3. A potato masher can mash potatoes, of course, but it can also mash just about anything you need to make a variety of dishes, such as jam.

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

GRIND IT

Unlike electric food processors, manual grinders chop food instead of mashing it.

These usually have the muscle to grind through not only veggies and fruit but meat, too.

Models usually come with two or three different blades so you adjust texture.

They are easy to take apart and clean.

Prices range from $30 to $150.

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

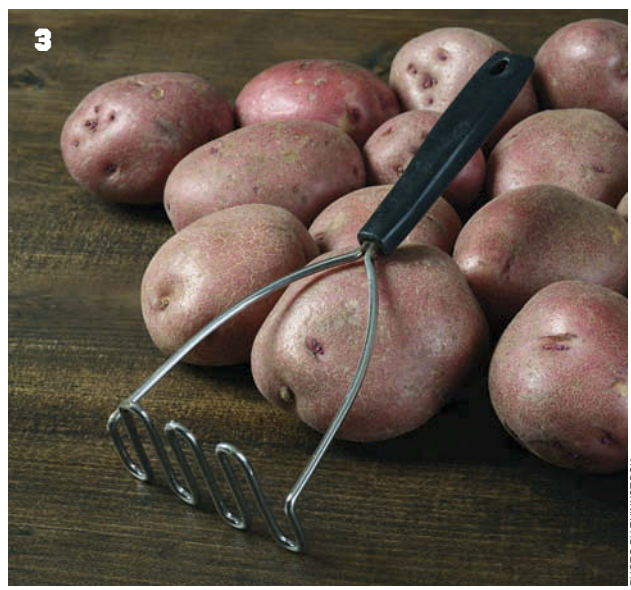


PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

"MANUALLY OPERATED KITCHEN TOOLS ARE MANDATORY FOR THE TRULY SELF-SUFFICIENT."

6

4

5

PHOTOS BY THINKSTOCK

CRANKY COLANDER FACTS

> Makes great sauces, purees, juices and jams without the painstaking peeling or coring.

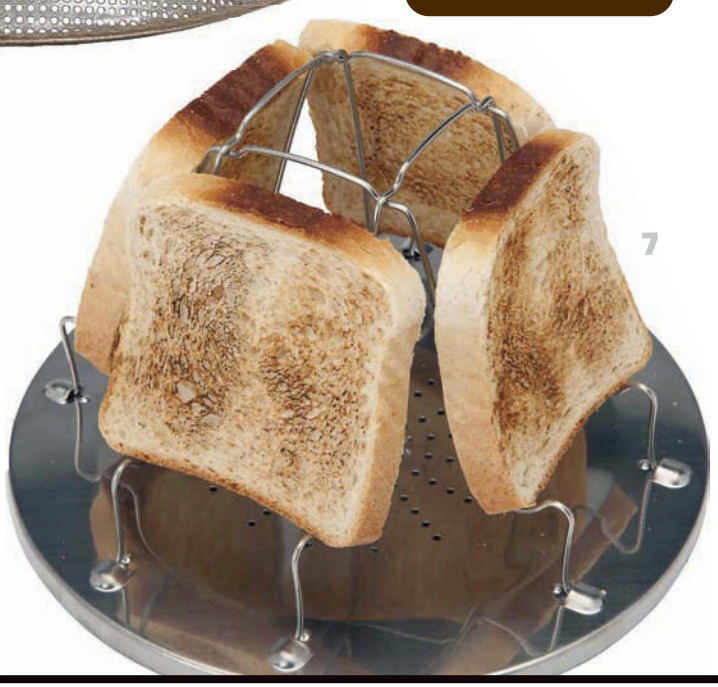
> Easily separates fruit and vegetable puree from unwanted skins, stems and seeds.

4. A manual food grinder will enable you to grind up veggies and fruits (and some meat) without electricity so you can get food ready for storage.

5. A stainless-steel, hand-cranked, cone-colander food mill gets the job done for making anything from apple-sauce to baby food and serves as a strainer as well.

6. A humble, manual can-opener is a must for opening stored foods.

7. A grill toaster is great for making toast sans toaster; you can find these in the camping section of many stores, and they are lightweight, small and inexpensive.



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PHOTOS BY THINKSTOCK

8. Although manual egg beaters won't work as well as your electric mixer, they will mix up eggs and whip cream.

9. A manual grater isn't just for cheese—you can grate vegetables and nearly anything else on it.

10. Percolators and French presses make excellent coffee and require no batteries or electricity to operate. Make sure you practice with both, as each can be a bit tricky to master. Don't forget a manual coffee grinder to prep the beans! ASG

PERCOLATOR HOW-TO

> Fill the body of the percolator up with the desired amount of water.
> Place the pump tube into the water, then slide the grounds basket onto the pump tube.
> Fill the grounds basket with the desired amount of coffee (filter is optional).
> Place the "spreader" on top of the grounds basket, then snap the lid onto the percolator.
> Heat until the water boils, then turn the heat to a low temperature and let the coffee "perk" for several minutes.
> Remove from heat, pour and enjoy.

COVERT DIGS

IN A BUG-OUT SITUATION, IS IT SAFE TO EXPLORE AND SLEEP IN A CAVE?

BY ALEX LAGRAND

CODE BLUE! YOU NEED TO BUG OUT. YOU HEAD FOR THE HILLS. YOU FIND A CAVE—CAN YOU STAY IN IT?

In the event of an emergency, it's quite possible that a cave can offer a prepper a temporary place to stay and wait out the situation.

To find out more about using caves as a refuge, we contacted Roger Brucker, cave explorer and author of the books "The Caves Beyond" and "The Longest Cave." Read on to find out what he has to say about this valuable source of shelter.

THE IMPORTANCE OF STABILITY

Safety is a No. 1 priority if you want to take refuge in a cave. It's imperative that you're able to recognize whether a cave is safe to enter. People often think that mines can be caved; however, mines pose a serious safety hazard due to instability.

"The reason mines are unstable is because they have been dynamited and blasted through tunnels, and as a result, the shockwaves tend to crack the rocks around them," says Brucker.

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

NEWBIES

If you want to start spelunking but you aren't sure where to start, check your area for a like-minded network. "Join a group of cave explorers—they're not hard to find [and] they're in every state," Brucker says. "These groups plan outings to go together, report on previous trips, plan who will help guide school students through a cave, etc."

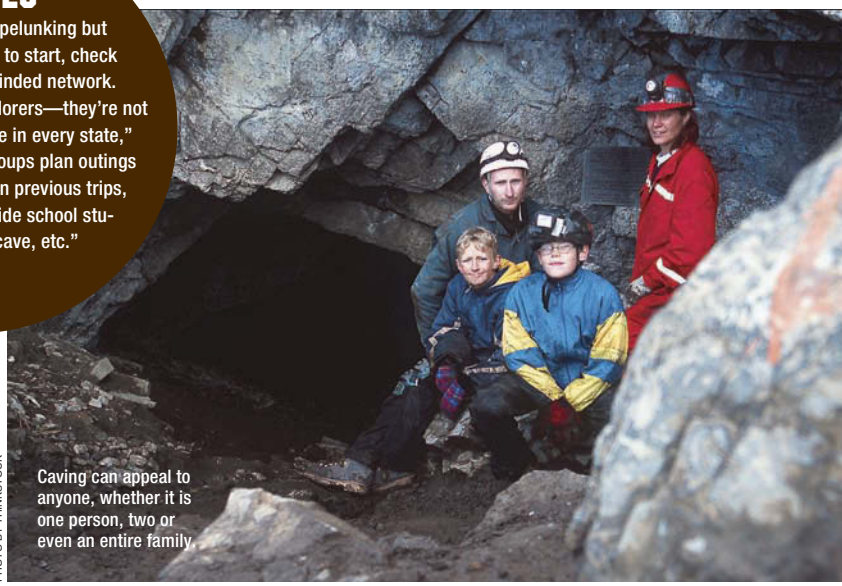


PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

Caving can appeal to anyone, whether it is one person, two or even an entire family.

"THE FACT THAT CAVES ARE OFTEN HOMES TO FURRY CREATURES IS A MYTH."

—ROGER BRUCKER, AUTHOR OF "THE CAVES BEYOND" AND "THE LONGEST CAVE"

THE RULES

If you're considering cave exploration, burn these tips from author and explorer Roger Brucker into your brain to ensure that you stay safe:

- Never explore alone.
- Always tell someone where you are going and when you will return.
- Always carry three sources of light.
- Wear a hard hat or a helmet.

Caves, on the other hand, are generally created by moving water. When the water leaves the cave, anything unstable leaves the cave with it in the form of breakdown. This leaves the cave as typically being extremely stable, Brucker says.

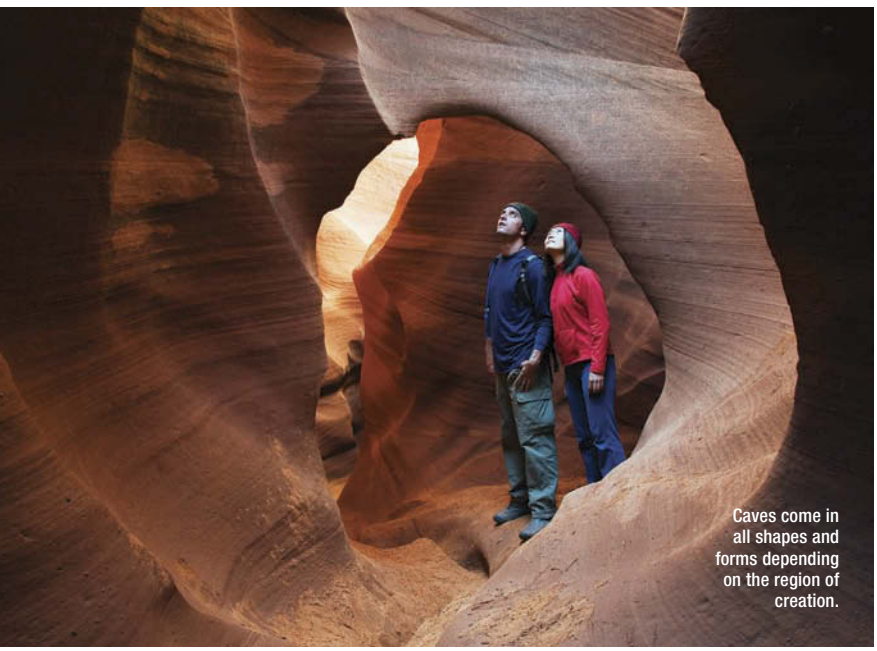
"You may find that erosion has caused surface issues around the entrances," he adds. "We often say 'entrances are being created and closed all the time through erosion,' but if it's open, then you can typically assume the cave is sound."

Getting out and caving can go a long way in helping you should you find yourself in a bug-out situation that requires you to find shelter; you'll know the ropes already!

LIONS AND TIGERS AND BEARS

If your first vision of a cave involves a four-legged squatter who doesn't want you to go inside, you may believe in fairy tales.

"The fact that caves are often home to furry creatures is a myth," Brucker says. "I suppose, in some climates, there may be caves in which bears hibernate, but that's only in an area with bears. I have never encountered something furry upon entering a cave in all my years of cave exploration," he adds.



Caves come in all shapes and forms depending on the region of creation.

PHOTOS BY THINKSTOCK

SAFETY FIRST

- If all of your lights fail, sit down and wait on the spot for help to come.
- Avoid jumping. Cave floors are seldom level, and a short jump may result in an injury.
- Carry a small first-aid kit. A large garbage bag or poncho will make a good heat tent using the heat from one candle or carbide lamp.
- If an immobilizing injury occurs, treat for shock (keep the injured caver warm) and contact the local rescue organization.
- Sitting still for long periods of time can cause hypothermia. Get moving, initiate activity.
- If you get lost, panic is your worst enemy. Remain calm, conserve light and if you followed the rule about leaving word with people, you will likely be OK.

Caves with an open entrance typically are safe to enter as opposed to closed entrances or mines.

"IN A CLUTCH, A CAVE CAN PROVIDE SAFETY AND A TEMPORARY DWELLING."

EQUIP YOURSELF

If you're planning on checking out caves for a day trip or you think you might need to bug-out in one, make sure you have the following equipment:

Helmet: A hard hat equipped with a chin-strap and mounted with your primary source of light is required. The hard hat should be of good quality and meet UIAA standards.

Back-up lights: At least two sources of backup light with spare parts are mandatory for safe caving; waterproof flashlights are a good choice.

Footware: Shoes should be sturdy hiking or work boots with non-slip, lug soles with ankle support.

Clothing: The temperature inside caves can get cold, so layer for extra warmth.

Gloves: These will keep your hands clean and help minimize cuts and scrapes.

Cave pack: A fanny pack of substantial strength or an old military pack is helpful in carrying needed extra equipment (water, food, flashlights, batteries, etc.)

Food: Carry enough high-energy food for the length of the trip; it's wise to carry some extra in case the trip takes longer than expected or in the event you become lost.

But just because a cave is bear-free doesn't mean it's ready to be inhabited as-is.

"When it comes to naptime, sleeping in a cave is deemed safe, but keep in mind that you should bring along a sleeping bag for comfort and warmth," Brucker says. "In addition, make sure you have potable water, which won't typically be available in a cave."

THE TAKEAWAY

In a clutch, a cave can provide safety and a temporary dwelling. Just remember to choose carefully and take appropriate supplies, and you should be able to wait out a disaster in relative safety. ASG

Alex LaGrand is a North Carolina-based freelance writer and outdoorsman who enjoys writing about the wilderness and the military.

THE SEARCH

Check out the National Speleogical Society's webpage with more than forty caves spanning five states at **www.caves.org/grotto/dcg/CC/cc-frameset.html.**

CONTACT INFO

▸ For more information about caves and how to get involved in the growing hobby of caving, visit the National Speleogical Society at **www.caves.org**.

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FIRESIDE FORTIFICATION

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY MICHAEL D'ANGONA

FIVE CAMPSITE "TOOLS" FOR PERSONAL DEFENSE

THE LAST THING YOU WANT TO WORRY ABOUT IF THE GRID GOES DOWN IS AN INTRUDER LOOKING TO ROB OR HURT YOU.

Unfortunately, if things get really tough, this can become a reality.

Weapons are sometimes overlooked as an essential survival item, and there are plenty of options. Of course, a primary source of personal protection is firearms. Whether you're firing warning shots to keep possible looters from ransacking your goods or using your ammo for hunting game for food in rural areas, rifles, pistols and plenty of ammo are indispensible.

But, as time passes and your bullet count dwindles, you need other options for personal defense. Explore the options below and decide what fits your needs, then "arm" up.

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

"... AS TIME PASSES
AND YOUR BULLET
COUNT DWINDLES, YOU
NEED OTHER OPTIONS
FOR PERSONAL DEFENSE."

1. WALKING STICK (STAFF)

The walking stick is an extremely valuable aid for traveling on uneven terrain. It can assist with your balance and stability when you become fatigued from walking long distances. It can also provide you with great long-range defense against a single enemy with a weapon, multiple attackers or even wild animals that you may encounter near your camp. Ranging from 4.5 to 6.5 feet long, a hardwood staff can be used to strike an attacker's head with quick follow-up strikes to his groin, ribs and weapon hand. It is especially useful when attacking low on your assailant's body, enabling you to "destroy his foundation" and take him down hard. An accurate strike to his sciatic nerve (a very large and sensitive nerve running downward from the waist line to the ankle) on the outer side of his thigh will cause his leg to become numb and unable to support his own weight. Always try to utilize both ends of the staff when in a confrontation: Think of the staff as having no distinct "handle" or "tip." Both ends are made for striking, as well as using the "butt" to ram into your enemy's face or belly.

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

2. MACHETE

The machete is one of the most useful tools to help clear dangling vines and brush as you walk through high areas of vegetation. Measuring in at nearly two feet of sharpened steel, the machete can slice cleanly through most debris, making it a formidable and intimidating mid-range weapon. During training, avoid making large overhead or wide-arcing strikes. This will leave your body—or, more specifically, your vital areas—exposed to an assailant's attack, which could result in stab or blunt-force wounds to your neck, abdomen or facial area. Instead, keep your strong arm (holding the machete, of course) in front of your body at all times, and make short, quick slashes at your opponent's nearest extremities. This will keep a barrier between you and your attacker at all times and allow you more precise and directed hits. Your free hand should always stay close to your face/upper-chest area to deflect any strike from your enemy that may get through your defense.

THREE KEY RULES

1 > Prepare ahead of time by stocking your camp and supply bag with all the necessary tools.

2 > Know the capabilities of the improvised weapons, their strengths as well as their weaknesses.

3 > Train with the weapons regularly to become smooth in technique and confident enough to rely on them to get you out of unknown and dangerous situations.

"IF THE TOMAHAWK IS CONSIDERED A CLOSE-RANGE WEAPON, THEN I WOULD PUT THE KNIFE IN A CATEGORY CALLED 'LAST RESORT.' "

3. TOMAHAWK (HATCHET)

Whether you have a stocky hatchet or a slightly lighter and more balanced tomahawk hanging from your backpack, either one will be extremely useful in close-quarter combat situations. Though variations do exist, most models will have one bladed side as well as a blunt or flat side, the exception being hatchets that have pointed spikes, double blades or even others with a hammer-shaped head. This weapon is used when your attacker bypasses your long- and mid-range weapons and comes in for a kill or knockout blow. The severity of the situation will determine how you attack with your tomahawk—is it a life-or-death situation or do you just have to slow down or incapacitate the person attacking you? A quick roll of the handle in your hand can change the attack from maim to kill within a fraction of a second. It is up to you to decide what needs to be done. Follow the same philosophy, as mentioned earlier, and always keep the weapon in front of you. Drawing your arm back will expose yourself to possible injury from a counter attack. Then, use precise hits and slashes, if need be, to weaken and overcome your attacker. You can also use the hook-like shape of the tomahawk to capture an enemy's arm or neck and apply an immobilization lock to end the fight quickly.

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

4. KNIFE

If the tomahawk is considered a close-range weapon, then I would put the knife in a category called "last resort." The knife would act as your last line of defense if all other choices failed to stop your attacker. If he were able to breach your barriers and come in for a finish, the knife would be there to stop him. It is important to have it attached to your body in the most easily accessible location, within arm's reach, at all times. The strap or locking mechanism that holds the knife in its sheath must be simple to detach with only a few fingers to avoid complications that may be vital to your survival. The knife itself should be made from one solid piece of sharpened metal with a full-tang handle (no separate handle that can detach or break away from the blade). Flip knives, sliders or any other knife in which the blade must be extended and locked into place should not be used to avoid the risk of malfunction and loss of precious time when the situation is critical. When an attacker is in close proximity to you, technical knife self-defense techniques aren't usually possible. It's a do-or-die situation, so just make any slashing or stabbing movements that you can to make him back off.

QUICK TIPS

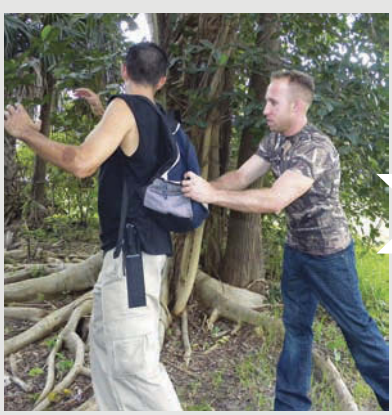
- → Your knife can easily be attached to the end of your walking stick (with duct tape, which is a must for every bug-out supply bag) to create a spear or long-range slashing weapon. This will give you an additional choice for personal protection if and when your ammo supply runs dry.
- → When researching martial art dojos, avoid competition/sport-based schools and focus on only those that teach realistic self-defense techniques. Try Japanese Jiu-Jitsu, Krav Maga or Jeet Kune Do.
- → When choosing a staff, there are two schools of thought. Some people prefer heavier, stronger oak or hickory staffs, while others choose rattan or white wax wood, which are lighter and more flexible, providing whipping or snapping strikes. Handle a few before you buy, and choose what fits your own personal needs.

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

5. EMPTY-HAND DEFENSE

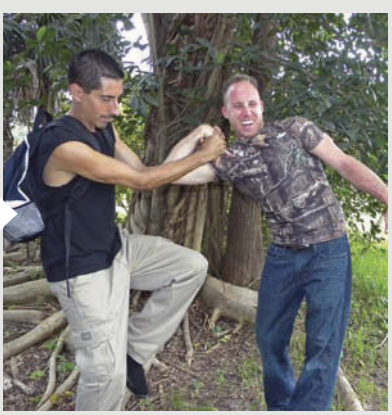
Although not a separate weapon like the previous entries, your training in hand-to-hand combat should be at a high enough level to be able to handle armed and unarmed assailants. Consistent practice in either martial arts or self-defense classes will give you a well rounded repertoire of techniques to use in multiple situations. Mastering a specific martial art is not a necessity, but learning the basics of striking, kicking, applying pressure points and chokes, weapon disarms and ground fighting can give you the edge when confronted by hostiles without the aid of a weapon. Becoming comfortable and natural with unarmed combat does not happen overnight or with only a few classes; it is only through constant repetition of techniques over months and possibly years until unfamiliar movements become second nature. Memorization of self-defense moves from various media sources is no substitution for hardcore, intense training. ASG

1_A THIEF TRIES TO TAKE YOUR BAG OF SUPPLIES.

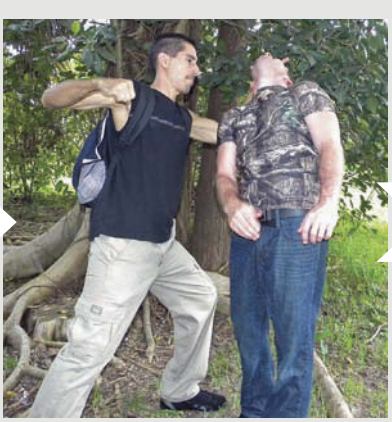


2_You turn, capture his arm and strike his face.

3_You apply a joint lock to his wrist.



4_Kick his knee joint to weaken his foundation.



5_Pull back on his head to set up an elbow-finishing move to his face.

FOR MORE INFO: ▸ www.aikisurvival.vpweb.com

1_YOU ARE ATTACKED WHILE WALKING: Use your walking stick to strike your opponent's head.

2_Follow up with a strike to his belly.

3_Take him down by sweeping his legs with the staff.

1_AN ATTACKER PUNCHES YOUR FACE: Redirect his strike.

2_Use your tomahawk to cut his thigh muscle.

3_As he drops his body, prepare a head strike.

4_Use the butt of the 'hawk to strike hard on the back of his neck.

5_Use the hooked end of the 'hawk to lock his elbow joint and take him down.

6_Finish him with a knee kick to the jaw.

Michael D'Angona is a freelance writer and experienced martial arts instructor. He owns and operates the Red Phoenix Martial Arts and Self Defense Academy in south Florida.

FORAGE ON

SURVIVALISTS: GET OUT AND LOOK FOR WILD FOOD TO HELP SUPPLEMENT YOUR DIET

BY ERIN HATFIELD | PHOTOS BY THINKSTOCK

IF SELF-PROCLAIMED "MUSHROOM GUY" ALAN MUSKAT HAS HIS WAY, FORAGING FOR FOOD WILL BECOME A MAJOR MEANS OF SUSTENANCE ACROSS THE COUNTRY. OWNER OF NO TASTE LIKE HOME, A "SLOW FOOD" PROGRAM IN ASHEVILLE, N.C., MUSKAT PROVIDES HANDS-ON EDUCATION ON FORAGING AND THE BENEFITS OF WILD FOODS IN WORKSHOPS FROM COAST TO COAST.

"Foraging is a profound alternative to the past 10,000 years of living in and eating out of boxes," Muskat explains. "Few people realize the wilderness is both a pantry and a pharmacy."

In plain terms, "foraging" means gathering food from the wild. This can range from collecting greens and insects to flowers and mushrooms. And, surprisingly, the practice is a viable means of putting food on the table.

"FEW PEOPLE REALIZE THE WILDERNESS IS BOTH A PANTRY AND A PHARMACY."

—ALAN MUSKAT, OWNER OF NO TASTE LIKE HOME

WILD FOOD BENEFITS

"From an early age, we're taught not to value growth that's natural," Muskat says. "We're taught that if we didn't grow it, it's unnatural. But that can't be farther from the truth."

Foraging provides a number of benefits, mainly providing healthier food. Biodiverse areas such as Muskat's Asheville are lush with a wide variety of plants that are free of pesticides and other chemical- and genetic-modification. The practice is also better for the planet, even during the current "farm to table" food boom.

"True local food is native wild food," Muskat points out.

But foraging is not an all-or-nothing practice—Muskat encourages people to supplement food from farmers' markets or supermarkets with gathered goods. The practice is good for adding variety to a diet and experiencing new flavors, too.

"The same plants can taste different each time you eat it," Muskat says.

Gathering wild foods also lays a foundation for self-sufficiency. Knowing how to survive off the land in times of emergencies can literally be a lifesaver. By practicing foraging and being familiar with the wild plants in a region, people can have a means of food in survival instances as well as a way to supplement freeze-dried and canned goods while backpacking and camping.

HANDS-ON LEARNING

During his classes, Muskat leads students through active foraging exercises, which are the best ways to learn which wild foods are edible in a region. Students are given a set of tools: a basket to keep items from getting crushed during collection, small wax or paper bags for plants and a "brife," a serrated knife taped to a small brush. Students can use the brife to clean off mushrooms, nuts and other wild food as well as cut bark or stems.

Muskat is huge proponent of classes and other hands-on learning. In fact, his biggest piece of advice is not to buy and follow a book. Most edible foods, especially mushrooms, have a lot of variation within a species. On average, books only have a single page per species, which doesn't allow a lot of room to illustrate differences.

12 EDIBLE WILD MUSHROOMS

Beefsteak Polypore – *(Fistulina hepatica)*
Boletes – *(Boletus spp)*
Chanterelles – *(Cantharellus spp.)*
Chicken Mushroom – (Laetiporus sulphureus)
Hen of the Woods – *(Grifola frondosa)*
Morel – *(Morchella spp.)*
Oyster Mushrooms – *(Pleurotus ostreatus)*
Puffballs – *(Lycoperdon spp. and Calvatia spp.)*
Shaggy Mane – *(Coprinus comatus)*
Milk Caps – *(Lactarius)*
Honey Mushrooms – *(Armillaria)*
Lobster Mushrooms – *(Hypomyces lactifluorum)*

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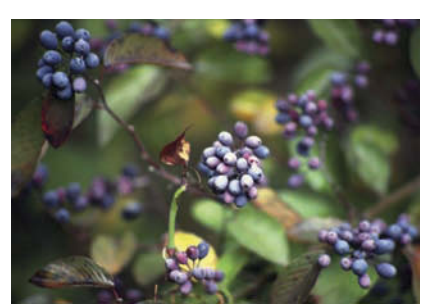
20 U.S. EDIBLE PLANTS

Wild Onion *(Allium bisceptrum)*
Common Milkweed *(Asclepias syriaca)*
Common Dandelion *(Taraxacum officinale)*
Common Plantain *(Plantago major)*
Lambsquarters *(Chenopodium album)*
Brambles *(Rubus sp.)*
Currants and Gooseberries *(Ribes sp.)*
Blueberries and Cranberries *(Vaccinium sp.)*
Sheep Sorrel *(Rumex acetosella)*
Chickweed *(Stellaria media)*
Red Clover *(Trifolium pretense)*
Garlic Mustard *(Alliaria petiolata)*
Miner's lettuce *(Claytonia perfoliata)*
Stinging Nettle *(Urtica dioica))*
Wild Strawberry *(Fragaria virginiana)*
American Elderberry *(Sambucus Canadensis)*
Violets *(Viola sp.)*
Common Chicory *(Cichorium intybus)*
Wild Sarsaparilla *(Aralia nudicaulis)*
Common Sunflower *(Helianthus annuus)*



MUSHROOM STEW

So now that you've gathered all those 'shrooms, what do you do with them? Make an easy stew!

3 tablespoons olive oil
2 medium onions, chopped
3 garlic cloves, minced
2 pounds mushrooms, cleaned and roughly chopped
1 pound red-skinned potatoes cut into ½-inch pieces
1 tablespoon minced rosemary (if you can find it)
1 tablespoon minced sage (if you can find it)
1 tablespoon minced thyme (if you can find it)
2 cups chicken or vegetable broth
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon black pepper

Heat a large pot over medium-high heat. Swirl in the olive oil, then add the onions and cook until soft and fragrant, about four minutes, stirring often. Add the garlic and cook for 30 seconds. Stir in the cremini and shiitake mushrooms. Cook just until the mushrooms begin to give off their liquid, about three minutes, stirring frequently. Stir in potatoes and add herbs; cook for about 30 seconds. Stir in the stock, cover and simmer until the potatoes are soft when pierced with a fork, about 12 minutes. Season with salt and pepper, and cook for another two minutes to bind the flavors. Note: The stew can be varied with almost any kind of mushroom. Good choices include oyster, lobster, honey, hen of the woods or any combination thereof, as long as you have a total of two pounds.

"RELYING ON BOOKS TO LEARN ABOUT FORAGING IS A GOOD WAY TO MAKE A MISTAKE."

—ALAN MUSKAT, OWNER OF NO TASTE LIKE HOME

EXPERIENCE: THE BEST TEACHER

Across the country, there are many edible plants that are highly common in wild areas. Among them are dandelion, mushrooms, plantain, sarsaparilla and wild onion. Experience is the best way to learn about the specific wild foods in a region. Muskat likens learning about various plants to being able to determine cabbage from lettuce—they look very similar in pictures, which is true of many wild plants.

"Relying on books to learn about foraging is a good way to make a mistake," Muskat explains. "Look at humans—we're just one species, and there's a great deal of variation. If we were to treat humans like wild food, who among us would be the single picture for our species?"

When embarking on a foraging trip, a good rule of thumb to keep in mind is to see 10 of something before you pick it. Knowing what plants look like in all stages of growth, as well as keeping a few tips in mind about when to harvest, can also help you identify edible food. Generally speaking, leaves are ideal for gathering in spring and summer, roots are edible in late fall and winter and fruits are in season in late summer and fall, as are seeds.

And if you're unsure of what you have and whether it's edible, ask. Take pictures of the plant, top and bottom, and send it to a local expert for identification. But even the experts can make a mistake. During a recent class, Muskat even shared a story where he mixed up two different mushrooms, one of which wasn't easily digestible.

DANDELION SOUP

Talk about comfort food: A hot bowl of this soup would go a long way in making you feel at home in the wild.

½ pound dandelion greens, washed and drained well, roots trimmed, stems chopped small, leaves chopped
4 tablespoons butter
½ cup chicken broth
2 tablespoons butter
2 carrots, diced small
1 small onion, diced
2 tablespoons flour
1 cup milk
½ tablespoon Dijon mustard
Salt and white pepper

Prep the greens. In a large skillet, melt 2 tablespoons butter. Add the greens, stir to coat with fat and cook until they begin to soften. Add the stock and continue cooking until greens are cooked but still bright green; remove this mixture and set aside. Melt remaining butter in pan and add carrots and onion; cook until softened. Stir in the flour, creating a heavy paste. A tablespoon at a time, stir in ½ cup of the milk, incorporating completely into the paste before adding more. Let cook for two to three minutes. Put the greens and the white sauce into a cone colander *(see "Manual Labor" on page 100 of this issue for tips on what hand-operated kitchen tools to keep on hand for wilderness situations)* and blend until smooth. Return to pan and stir in mustard and remaining milk (or cream); season to taste with salt and pepper, heat and serve.

"CONTRARY TO POPULAR BELIEF, MANY WILD MUSHROOMS ARE NOT, IN FACT, POISONOUS."

While it's difficult to tell if some plants and mushrooms are toxic, many have warning signs. These can include a milky sap, thorns, a bitter taste, an "almond" scent and a three-leaved growth pattern, among other indicators. Some edible foods, such as the dandelion, exhibit these characteristics, so experience with the plants in a region is the biggest indicator of what is unsafe. In survival situations, however, you may have to test unknown plants by sampling a small bite and waiting several hours or even a day or two to see if the item was tolerated.

In addition to staying away from poisonous plants, Muskat also advises avoiding areas where pesticides and other toxins are present. These include roadsides, cemeteries and railroad tracks. Surprisingly, some national parks and other natural areas use sprays that can coat or be absorbed by plants. Mushrooms, for example, easily absorb toxic heavy metals that are in the surrounding soil.

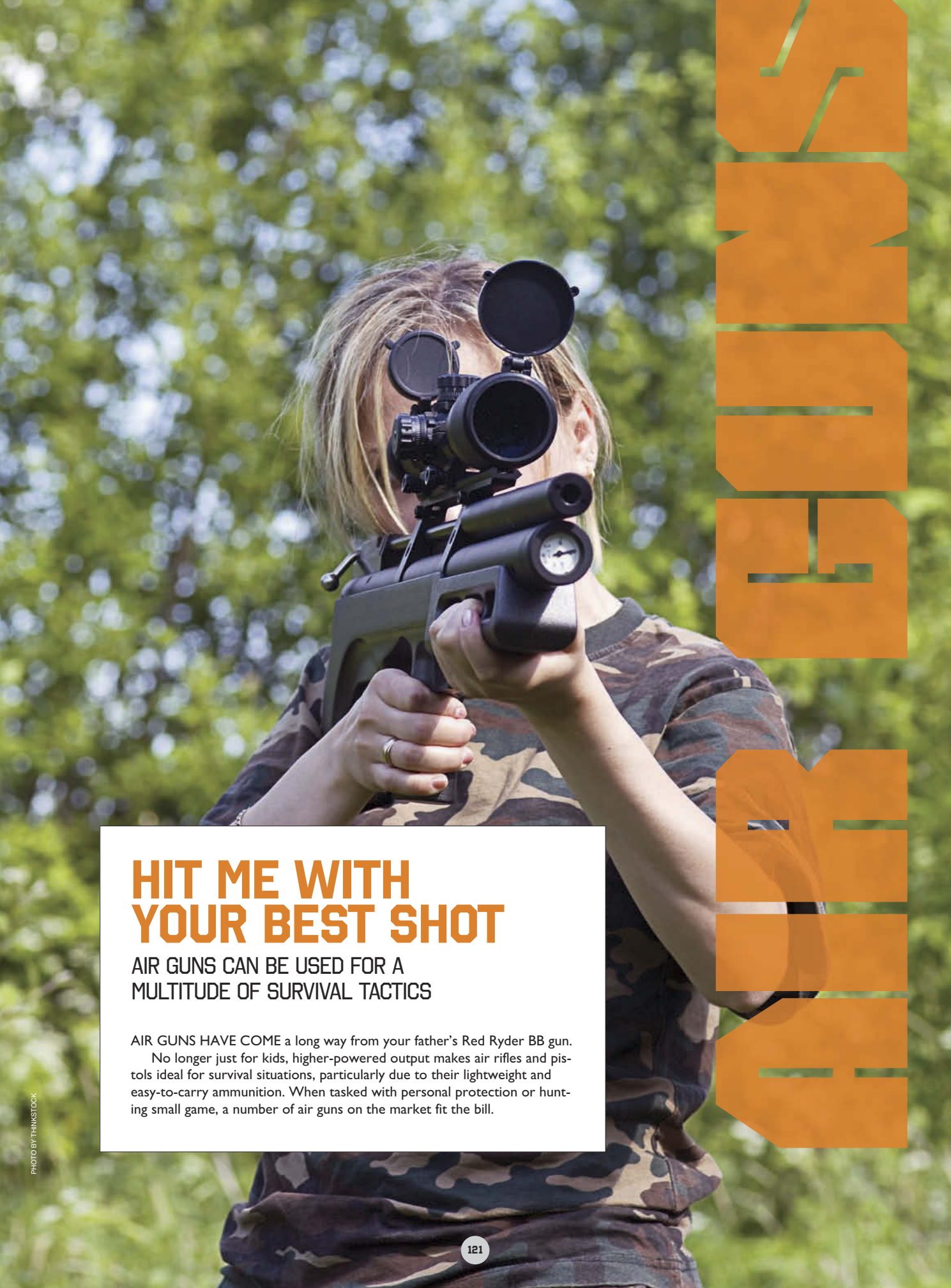
MYTH BUSTING: POISONOUS 'SHROOMS

Contrary to popular belief, many wild mushrooms are not, in fact, poisonous, Muskat says. Of the more than 10,000 species of mushroom in North America, fewer than 10 are known to be deadly. Rather than being poisonous, most mushrooms are just poorly digested.

"Mushrooms are made of chitin, like crustaceans," Muskat explains. "Eaten raw, that is hard for the body to break down, so it's best to cook mushrooms or ferment them before eating."

The most deadly wild mushroom is the *Amanita*, which looks like a stereotypical red toadstool with white flecks on the cap. The mushroom is a known psychoactive and hallucinogenic food, and it also produces an enzyme that is detrimental to the liver and kidneys. Despite this, there are very few recorded deaths attributed to mushroom consumption, even with the *Amanita*.

With a little bit of practice and guidance from a local expert, foraging and adding edible wild foods to your diet can be an easy task. Not only can foraging help you survive in an emergency, it can be a means of diversifying and supplementing your diet with fresh, truly local foods. ASC



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No longer just for kids, higher-powered output makes air rifles and pistols ideal for survival situations, particularly due to their lightweight and easy-to-carry ammunition. When tasked with personal protection or hunting small game, a number of air guns on the market fit the bill.

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

"THE BENJAMIN WOODS WALKER .22-CALIBER PCP PISTOL IS ULTRA-QUIET AND, WITH PRACTICE, IS MORE THAN ACCURATE …"

2 CROSMAN CORPORATION
$509.99

1 CROSMAN CORPORATION
$179.99

1 CROSMAN CORPORATION

Model: Model CD8M22NP
www.crosman.com
MSRP: $179.99

Key Features: Low-noise, single-shot, quick and easy optic mounting

Description: Crosman's Nitro Venom air rifle delivers serious hunting power with muzzle energy up to 21 fluid power energy and velocities of up to 950 feet per second. This single-shot, break-barrel air rifle features a precision, rifled barrel with fluted muzzle break and sculpted rubber recoil pad. The rifle is equipped with a CenterPoint 3-9 by 32mm precision scope and a quick-lock mounting system for quick and easy optic mounting. The ambidextrous synthetic stock has a raised cheek piece and modified, beavertail forearm designed to promote the artillery hold shooting position. The wider surface area of the forearm is designed to rest on the palm of your hand and assists in achieving improved accuracy with break-barrel air rifles.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"Offering affordable peace of mind, Crosman Airguns are quiet and deliver sufficient power to take small game at more than 20 yards. Great for trapping and small-game hunting, pellets don't cause as much tissue damage as other types of ammunition, leaving you with more."* — LAURA EVANS, MARKETING COORDINATOR

2 CROSMAN CORPORATION

Model: Maurauder Woods Walker Pistol
www.crosman.com
MSRP: $509.99

Key Features: .22-caliber pistol, multi-shot bolt action

Description: The Marauder Woods Walker pistol unleashes magnum power in a package small enough to fit in a pack. It has the authority to take out small game, and, if needed, this repeater gives a precise follow-up shot. The included CenterPoint Multi-Tac Quick Aim Sight with custom dovetail rings allows for fast acquisition and precise targeting. It comes equipped with a stock extension to shoulder mount the gun, and, with 2,900 psi of compressed air, this gun has the muscle to quietly and dependably get the job done. The pistol features an eight-shot rotary magazine and a crisp two-stage trigger. This ProPick kit includes the Benjamin Marauder Woods Walker PCP pistol, CenterPoint Multi-TAC Quick Aim Sight, Benjamin High-Pressure Hand Pump, additional eight-round magazine and a tin of 500 Benjamin hunting pellets.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"An excellent choice for hunting, the Benjamin Woods Walker .22-caliber PCP pistol is ultra quiet and, with practice, is more than accurate enough to easily take small game from up to 33 yards away."* —LAURA EVANS, MARKETING COORDINATOR

3 GAMO USA
$254.95

4 AIRFORCE AIRGUNS
$737

3 GAMO USA

Model: Silent Stalker
www.gamousa.com
MSRP: $254.95

Key Features: Lightweight, all-weather, single shot

Description: The Silent Stalker offers all-weather durability combined with maximum performance. Lightweight synthetic stock, match-grade fluted barrel and 1,300 feet per second with PBA—thanks to the new IGT (Inert Gas Technology)—make the Silent Stalker ideal for small-game hunting, targets and pest control. The gun features a two-stage, adjustable, smooth-action trigger with manual safety as well as a non-slip texture design on both the grip and forearm.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"With IGT and the new recoil pad with up to 74-percent absorbing pressure, this adult break-barrel delivers a unique experience."* —DAVID, CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

4 AIRFORCE AIRGUNS

Model: CondorSS Air Rifle
www.airforceairguns.com
MSRP: $737

Key Features: Quiet, pre-charged, ambidextrous, ideal for small-game hunting

Description: The CondorSS air rifle is the latest addition to the AirForce Airguns family of pre-charged air rifles. It's based on the top-selling Condor frame with an 18-inch barrel integrated with the new SuperShroud for maximum noise suppression. Standard on all models is AirForce Airguns' Crisp-Break trigger/safety system, which is crisper and has less travel than the previous trigger. The new trigger group is also fully ambidextrous with a manual safety mounted in the front of the trigger guard. The rifle is offered with either the Quick-Detach air tank or the Spin-Loc system air tank. With the CondorSS, shooters can hunt small game, enjoy target practice at the range or in the backyard and even shoot indoors.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"We had a lot of customer feedback on both the Condor and TalonSS models. So, we took the highest-praised parts of each and turned that into the CondorSS air rifle."* —JOHN MCCASLIN, AIRFORCE FOUNDER AND CEO

"THE STOEGER X50 IS THE MAGNUM CHOICE FOR ALL AIR RIFLE CHORES AND CHALLENGES, FROM PLINKING AND TARGET SHOOTING TO PEST CONTROL AND SMALL-GAME HUNTING."

5 WESTMINSTER BY DAISY OUTDOOR PRODUCTS

Model: Model 1250CS
www.winchesterairrifles.com
MSRP: $219.99

Key Features: Break-barrel, bipod legs, fiber optic sights

Description: The composite stock is clad in Mossy Oak Break-Up Infinity Camo and features a thumbhole grip for added wrist support and straighter trigger pull. The fold-down bipod legs extend from 9 to 13.5 inches and provide steady support on the bench or in the field. The included web sling allows for ease of carry in the field and provides shooting stability. Also included are fiber optic sights and air rifle scope. The rifled steel barrel delivers velocities up to 1,250 feet per second with .177-caliber alloy pellets.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"The model 1250CS is a feature-packed break-barrel that really performs."* —JOE C. MURFIN, VP OF PUBLIC RELATIONS, DAISY OUTDOOR PRODUCTS

6 STOEGER INDUSTRIES

Model: X50
usa.stoegerairguns.com
MSRP: $249-$359

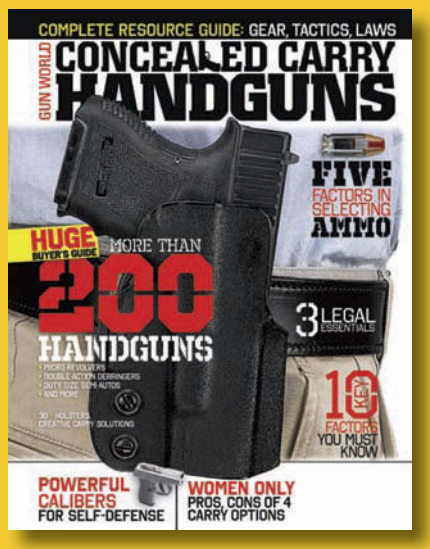
Key Features: Ambidextrous safety, break-action, checkered pistol grip

Description: The Stoeger X50 is a powerful air gun with an ergonomic cocking grip that assures fast and easy, single-stroke charging on each and every shot. The blued-steel, rifled barrel provides accuracy and comes standard with fiber-optic front and adjustable rear sights. Target acquisition is quick and easy with red front and two-dot, green rear fiber-optic inserts, and X50 models are mounted in Monte Carlo-style stocks for improved control and target acquisition. All X50 receivers feature an integral dovetail scope-rail and are offered in a combo model that includes a 3-9 by 40mm parallax adjustable rifle-scope. For added security, the X50 features an automatic, ambidextrous safety that's easily accessible on the rear of the receiver.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"The Stoeger X50 is the magnum choice for all air rifle chores and challenges, from plinking and target shooting to pest control and small-game hunting. A robust, spring-piston, break-action system gives you the power to drive .177 alloy pellets at a potent 1,500 feet per second."* —JOE COOGAN, BRAND MARKETING MANAGER

5 WINCHESTER BY DAISY OUTDOOR PRODUCTS
$219.99

6 STOEGER INDUSTRIES
$249-$359



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"WITH VELOCITIES UP TO 1,400 FEET PER SECOND, THE MODEL 1400CS IS A HIGH-PERFORMANCE BREAK ACTION PELLET RIFLE ..."

7 WINCHESTER BY DAISY OUTDOOR PRODUCTS
$229

8 CROSMAN CORPORATION
$169.99

7 WINCHESTER BY DAISY OUTDOOR PRODUCTS

Model: Model 1400CS
www.winchesterairrifles.com
MSRP: $229

Key Features: 1,400-feet-per-second velocity, thumbhole grip, sound suppressor

Description: The Winchester model 1400CS features a thumbhole grip for added wrist support and straighter trigger pull. The included web sling allows for ease of carry in the field and provides shooting stability. A 3-9 by 32mm break-barrel air-rifle scope is included. The rifled steel barrel delivers velocities up to 1,400 feet per second with .177-caliber alloy pellets. A muzzle-mounted sound suppressor reduces sound emission by 50 percent.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"With velocities up to 1,400 feet per second, the Model 1400CS is a high-performance break action pellet rifle that's as comfortable hunting game as it is shooting targets. The model 1400CS is packed with features, which will make it your favorite air rifle."* —JOE C. MURFIN, VP OF PUBLIC RELATIONS, DAISY OUTDOOR PRODUCTS

8 CROSMAN CORPORATION

Model: Benjamin 392
www.crosman.com
MSRP: $169.99

Key Features: Multi-pump, pneumatic, bolt-action air rifle, .22 caliber

Description: The Benjamin 392 .22-caliber multi-pump pneumatic features a sleek and lightweight American hardwood Monte Carlo stock and fully rifled brass barrel. With velocities of up to 685 feet per second, the 392 is perfect for small game and pests but equally as good for backyard target practice. Fully adjustable sights will helps users zero in on a target.

Manufacturer's Comment: *"Timeless performance and dependable accuracy have kept the Benjamin 392 on the favorites list for years."* —LAURA EVANS, MARKETING COORDINATOR ASC

PHOTO COURTESY OF TIM RALSTON

PREPPING WITH RALSTON

BY TIM RALSTON

Timothy Bryan Ralston is an American inventor, veteran, adventurer, author and movie consultant for his expertise in the field of survival and preparedness education. He is best known for his appearance in the powerful motivational film *The Compass* and for being the international spokesperson in the launch of NatGeo's No. 1-rated program, *Doomsday Preppers*.

KID POWER

Teach Your Children To Become Self-Reliant Through Emergency Preparedness

I BELIEVE THAT EVERY PERSON should stand prepared, regardless of age.

Although kids might not fully understand this crazy world we live in, from natural disasters to violence to political chaos, they are just as equally affected. My goal is to empower parents so they can empower their children and alleviate their fears regarding the unknown. By providing them with the proper knowledge and tools, feelings of anxiety will change into confidence during times of disorder.

"HOWEVER YOU DECIDED TO PREPARE YOUR KIDS, JUST REMEMBER THE KEY IS TO LEAD BY EXAMPLE."

PHOTO BY TIM RALSTON

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PHOTO COURTESY OF GEAR UP CENTER

Gear Up Center's lightweight, bullet-stopping Level IIIA protection shield can go a long way toward protecting your child. Simply insert the 10-by-15-inch shield in your child's backpack and secure with Velcro to the backside.

TALK ABOUT IT

A great way to start this process would be to open an age-appropriate conversation with your child. For example, ask them about what would happen if the power went out. What types of things wouldn't work anymore? This will help lead to thinking of alternatives for our everyday reliance on electricity and technology. Comfort them with the fact that, although sometimes this happens, by preparing supplies, you'll always have what you need.

INVOLVEMENT

Get them involved! Kids will be amused by picking out groceries that don't require a refrigerator or by being in charge of finding handy places to store flashlights. For the adventurous child, taking them out on camping and long hiking trips can prove to be invaluable as you teach them outdoor skills such as how to start a fire or build a lean-to.

MAKE A PLAN

The next big focus involves what your child should do if ever you were not together during a disaster. They should know important phone numbers, meeting places and who to contact depending on the situation. Make a game out of quizzing them on this information, along with a map they can follow leading to your family's meeting spot.

IMPORTANT PLANS

- Water
- Food
- Shelter
- Energy
- Defense

EVERDAY AWARENESS

In order to build kids' consciousness regarding everyday preparedness, pack a small emergency kit in your child's school backpack. Fill it with items such as high-calorie energy bars, water pouches, a light stick, an emergency blanket and band-aids.

Although some may call this overkill, a lightweight, bullet-resistant backpack insert can help kids and parents feel safer should the worst scenario happen. It can be used as a bullet blocker or protective backpack shield that resists penetration to virtually all handgun-fired rounds/bullets and knife attacks.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

- Camp with your children.
- Take them on hikes.
- Take them to the market to pick out emergency food.
- Quiz them on "what if?" situations.

HAVE IT YOUR WAY

However it is you decide to prepare your kids, just remember the key is to lead by example. Make sure you have plans mapped out for your family covering the five basic essentials: water, food, shelter, energy and defense. By doing so, you can get back to concentrating on what is truly important in life: your kids. ASG

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CLOSING WORDS

"IT IS NOT THE STRONGEST OR THE MOST INTELLIGENT WHO WILL SURVIVE BUT THOSE WHO CAN BEST MANAGE CHANGE."

—CHARLES DARWIN

PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK

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